On the Subject of "Java"

John Pemberton

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

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Page from an illuminated Kraton Surakarta manuscript describing the royal pleasure retreat, Ngèksipurna Pengging. Portrayed in conventional shadow-puppet style is the Central Javanese monarch Pakubuwana X (r. 1893–1939), en route to the retreat. (R. T. Arungbinang, *Serat Babad Pasanggrahan Ngèksipurna Pengging*. Inscribed by Kiswamalaya, illustrated by Sunarja. Ms. SP 258Ca; SMP KS 144. Composed Surakarta, 1914; inscribed Surakarta, 1914.) Courtesy Kraton Surakarta; photograph by the Surakarta Manuscript Project.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To make acknowledgments is already to have begun writing an introduction. For recalled in acknowledgments are particular convergences of persons and institutions, of events and locations, that make a project such as the one now bound in this book, increasingly, over time, conceivable. Thus, the project presented here might very well have begun without my knowing it at Wesleyan University in the late 1960s and early 1970s when I was an undergraduate majoring in anthropology, then a graduate student in ethnomusicology. It was not at all unthinkable for students at that time, in that place, to attend lectures by the late John Cage, then drive to D.C. for a week of antiwar demonstrations, then return to practice Javanese gamelan music with the late Bp. Prawotosaputro, whose musical talents and curiosity had carried him from his Central Javanese home in Surakarta, to Wesleyan via the New York World's Fair. Indeed, our practice and performance of this indigenous Southeast Asian music seemed to embody, somehow, at least some of the spirit of protests against U.S. imperialist intervention in Southeast Asia. And studies with Cage simply reaffirmed the sense of significance attached to this singular coincidence of experiences.

So it did not seem unnatural that some of us went on to study in Indonesia, as far away from the United States as possible and as close to Javanese musicians as imaginable. For me, this was facilitated by funding from the American Society for Eastern Arts, a unique, rather marginal institution that conveyed numerous non-western performers to the United States as visiting artists and sent its U.S. students "abroad," crossing boundaries in ways that now might be called multicultural. In 1971 and again during 1975–77 I lived in Indonesia, mostly in Central Java, ostensibly pursuing musical interests. I am especially indebted to two very gifted gamelan performers and teachers, K. R. T Wasitodipura and the late R. L. Martopangrawit. While studying music in Java, I was invariably drawn into a much broader field of social concerns informing the intensely urban neighborhood in Surakarta where I resided, concerns ranging from Javanese linguistic etiquette to Indonesian political gossip. I should note that the received Orientalist vision (both in modern Indonesia and abroad) of Central Javanese gamelan performance as a model

of quasi-cosmic sobriety and harmonious equilibrium was pleasurably shattered by Surakarta musicians inspirited by vats of locally produced liquor (in a country where alcoholic consumption is not the norm) and by a pronounced sense of competitiveness. Even at the sonorous heart of Javanese "culture" was a sensibility at odds with the refined aesthetics of social harmony. Thus, a project such as this book in which I explore the history and politics of a patently cultural discourse—that informing the subject of "Java"—might first have been conceivable for me at that time. Perhaps.

Through a series of coincidences I returned to graduate school not in ethnomusicology but in anthropology at Cornell University in 1978. Two teachers at Cornell have haunted my thoughts ever since, James Siegel and Benedict Anderson. Although it is tempting to say that the former did so vis-à-vis issues of language and signification and the latter vis-à-vis issues of power and historiography, really the reverse could also be the case. Without their insights and criticisms, the present book would have been inconceivable. I am deeply indebted to them both.

With generous funding from the Social Science Research Council and a Fulbright-Hays fellowship and with the kind sponsorship of the Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia in Jakarta, I returned to Central Java for fieldwork during 1982–84. Most of the materials informing this book come from that time, some from my previous years of residence in Indonesia, others from a later time, either through correspondence or archival research. Although there are many Indonesians whose various contributions to this book I would like to acknowledge fully here, I must refrain from doing so because of the critical stance of the book and political conditions in contemporary Indonesia. For the time being, I note my special indebtedness to Mas T., Mas B., Bu S., and Pak H. I also express my deep gratitude to the late Bp. Suranto, a Surakarta professor who patiently tutored me in Javanese language and translation; the late Ki Sutrisna, a gifted shadow puppeteer from Klaten and critic of Dutch scholarship on Java; and the late K. R. M. T. H. Sanjoto Sutopo Kusumohatmodjo (head of Palace Affairs at the Mangkunagaran), who introduced me to the Mangkunagaran Palace's Reksa Pustaka library and graciously permitted me to reproduce colonial-era photographs from the palace collection. I am indebted as well to the library staffs of the Reksa Pustaka and Surakarta's Museum Radyapustaka.

Substantial portions of this book were written at Cornell University during 1986–89. I am grateful to many friends and teachers there at that time, particularly Benedict Anderson, Nancy Florida, Marilyn Ivy, Audrey Kahin, Saya Shiraishi, Takashi Shiraishi, James Siegel, Amrih Wi-

dodo, and Philip Yampolsky, for their criticisms and suggestions. The book manuscript was, in many respects, reconceived and expanded while I was at the Michigan Society of Fellows during 1989–92. I am indebted to the Society of Fellows and the Department of Anthropology at the University of Michigan for providing me the time and scholarly space to do so. While I was at Michigan, and now at the University of Washington, colleagues have commented generously on portions (and in some cases, the whole) of the manuscript revised here for publication. In this regard, I am especially indebted to Fernando Coronil, E. Valentine Daniel, Nicholas Dirks, Michael Fotiadis, Webb Keane, Arlene Lev, Daniel Lev, Hendrik Maier, Vicente Rafael, Rafael Sanchez, Patricia Spyer, Ann Stoler, Thomas Williamson, and Thomas Wolfe. Special thanks are also due Ben Abel and April Ryan for their suggestions and help on maps.

At almost every point in the writing and rewriting of this book, Nancy Florida made invaluable contributions. As a scholar whose breadth of knowledge concerning Javanese history and literary production is extraordinary, she offered numerous suggestions on the selection and status of Javanese manuscripts in Surakarta archives, assisted in translating particularly difficult passages of those manuscripts, and alerted me to historiographic inconsistencies and ethnographic oversights. She also commented at length on nearly every draft. I am deeply grateful for the energy and insight she brought to this book.

Lastly, I am indebted to Marilyn Ivy, an anthropologist of Japan engaged in thinking through issues similar to those raised in this book, for her formidable critical readings of my work. She offered many reflections on theoretical matters, and did so from a distinctly non-Indonesianist perspective. Without her readings, contemplations, and always compassionate criticisms, the book would never have taken the shape that it has.

J. P.

A Note on Manuscripts, Transliteration, and Translation

The original Javanese manuscripts referred to in this book are from three repositories in Surakarta, Java: the Sasana Pustaka in the Kraton Surakarta; the Reksa Pustaka in the Istana Mangkunagaran; and the Museum Radyapustaka. Citations of these manuscripts include two sorts of reference system. The "Ms" reference that immediately follows the manuscript title refers to the catalog entry of the local repository (with "SP" introducing Sasana Pustaka references, "RP" Reksa Pustaka, and "Rp" Radyapustaka). The "SMP" reference, however, is based on the cataloging system of the Surakarta Manuscript Project (1980–83), a project that microfilmed and cataloged Javanese manuscript collections in Surakarta. In this system, "KS" refers to the Kraton Surakarta, "MN" to the Mangkunagaran, and "RP" to the Radyapustaka. A complete bibliographic entry with author, title, double references, and place and date of composition and inscription appears, for example, as follows:

> Yasadipura I, R. Ng. *Babad Prayut.* Ms. RP B32b; SMP MN 212. Composed Surakarta, late eighteenth century; inscribed Surakarta, 1854.

Microfilm copies of the manuscripts are available for use in the originating collections as well as at the Indonesian National Archives in Jakarta and at Cornell University Library's Echols Collection. The first of a four-volume annotated catalog for these manuscripts, *Javanese Literature in Surakarta Manuscripts,* vol. 1: *Introduction and Manuscripts of the Karaton Surakarta,* by Nancy K. Florida, has recently been published (1993) by the Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University.

In transliterating bibliographic entries (and passages quoted) from Javanese script, I have followed the system of Javanese transliteration standard in Indonesia today. Entries from published romanized sources, however, may follow older systems of transliteration. Place names follow the current Indonesian system of spelling. All translations from Javanese and Indonesian are my own, unless otherwise noted. I have translated the titles of Javanese (and Indonesian) manuscripts and publications, noted the titles of the original sources in parentheses, and then referred primarily to the translated titles throughout the book.

On the Subject of "Java"

INTRODUCTION

When I returned to Indonesia in February 1982 to research what I loosely perceived as the peculiar relationship between culture and politics in Java under the New Order rule of the Soeharto regime, something marvelous happened. The research permit that I had tracked for months through various offices of project sponsorship, security confirmation, and police identification did indeed "emerge" (as Indonesian bureaucrats invariably put it, as if they themselves are pleasantly surprised by such results) on February 19, 1982. But the permit also expired on the same date. Perhaps, I thought, my previous years of residence in Java during the 1970s had somehow foreclosed future possibilities although I spent most of those years as a student of Javanese performing arts, particularly of gamelan music, hardly a practice at odds with New Order rhetorical appeals to cultural preservation. Or, perhaps, my 1980s research proposal somehow seemed risky to a regime well known for its sudden termination of visas for foreign visitors although, once again, one could hardly think of a proposed topic more apparently innocuous than my own, the centrality of the construct "ritual" in Javanese cultural discourse. The novel coincidence of dates on my research permit, which placed my topic in a limbo of prefigured closure, definitively concluded at the very moment it would begin, was, however,

simply the result of standard New Order procedure. On May 4, 1982, the Soeharto government was to hold its third national elections. For the sake of "security," I was informed, all research in Indonesia would be prohibited for three months before election day and one month after. No exceptions were possible, even for research on ritual. Nevertheless, I would be permitted to move directly to Solo, a Central Javanese city of one-half million people, as long as I did not travel to any villages and did not ask any questions concerning my research topic proper or, for that matter, culture in general. With these instructions in mind, I took up residence in Solo and turned my attention to the most obvious topic that I was officially *not* researching: the elections themselves.

This sudden detour of attention, which effectively refocused my thoughts on just what the research prohibitions meant to obscure, was in any case unavoidable. The unmistakable campaign noise of crowds in motion, propelled by convoy trucks with loudspeakers blaring and by hundreds of demufflered motorcycles dare-deviling through traffic, entirely overpowered the everyday sounds of Solonese life. I found all this quite amazing, despite its apparent predictability, that is, that such noise should emerge, with excitement, under New Order rule every five years in the form of Indonesian national election campaigning. For this excitement seemed to counter the fact that the elections are always won by the government party by almost exactly the same percentage (the 1982 results were no different) just as the noise itself disrupted the uncanny stillness that normally dominates Indonesia under the Soeharto regime when it comes to political matters.

If one looks comparatively at, say, the Philippines or other countries marked by scenes of political activism and public protest aimed at displacing incumbent regimes and repressive socioeconomic structures, Soeharto's Indonesia has displayed a certain quiescence, an appearance of order that is at once remarkable and peculiar. It is remarkable in light of the oppressive socioeconomic conditions in contemporary Indonesia, just the kinds of conditions that motivate opposition movements in other so-called developing countries, and it is peculiar given Indonesia's own history of political activism, particularly the highly politicized years 1945–66. Indonesians witnessed a national revolution in the late 1940s, an efflorescence of political parties in the 1950s, massive peasant movements in the early 1960s, and the highly politicized killings in 1965–66 that accompanied Soeharto's rise to power, leaving one-half to one million people dead and hundreds of thousands imprisoned.[1] Since the ad-

[1] For recent discussions concerning these killings, see Robert Cribb, ed., *The Indonesian Killings, 1965–1966: Studies from Java and Bali* (Clayton, Victoria: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, Monash University, 1990).

vent of the New Order government in 1966, public demonstrations of opposition have become relatively unusual and an all-encompassing order appears to prevail.

Exceptional moments that publicly challenge the Soeharto regime's security have, of course, occurred in New Order times. The visit of Japan's prime minister Kakuei Tanaka to Jakarta in 1974 was, for example, spectacularly disrupted by thousands of Indonesian students critical of New Order corruption and Soeharto regime business practices. Their demonstrations led to mass riots, confrontation with the Indonesian military, and 883 arrests.[2] In January 1978, students again moved in protest and were confronted, once more, with mass arrests and a New Order policy of campus normalization (*normalisasi kampus*) under which university life became formally "depoliticized."[3] Opposition from certain Muslim communities and representatives encountered similar responses during the late 1970s and 1980s, when many local religious leaders critical of New Order ideology and laws were tortured and imprisoned on charges of subversion.[4] Resistance in East Timor to Indonesia's brutal invasion and occupation of this former Portuguese colony in the Lesser Sunda chain constitutes, of course, the most sustained challenge to New Order authority, yet the nature and extent of this resistance has been systematically suppressed by the Indonesian media, and Timor itself seems quite distant from the everyday lives of most Indonesians.[5] Although displays of open opposition to the Soeharto regime have occasionally taken place, they are relatively rare—particularly in Java—and are immediately isolated, suppressed, and reread by the government as unfortunate "incidents" (*peristiwa*).

Yet, less-determined expressions of opposition to the current order of things still emerge. During the 1977 national elections, for example, someone in a small town in Central Java turned the bus terminal's public TV set upside down. No one seemed to know who had done this, nor did it really matter. To the howling delight of villagers, President Soeharto

[2] A summary of student opposition in New Order times appears in Julie Southwood and Patrick Flanagan, *Indonesia: Law, Propaganda, and Terror* (London: Zed Press, 1983), pp. 184–87, 189–90.

[3] For a spirited critique of normalisasi kampus and broader forms of New Order repression, see Heri Akhmadi, *Breaking the Chains of Oppression of the Indonesian People: Defense Statement at His Trial on Charges of Insulting the Head of State* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University, 1981).

[4] The eloquent formal defense pleas of two Central Javanese Islamic leaders tried on such charges appear in Irfan Suryahardy, ed., *Perjalanan Hukum di Indonesia: Sebuah Gugatan* (Yogyakarta: Ar-Risalah, 1982).

[5] See John G. Taylor, *Indonesia's Forgotten War: The Hidden History of East Timor* (London: Zed Books, 1991).

gave an official speech while standing on his head. But many such expressions are only transient sources of gossip that soon plays itself out. What remains is a general appearance of order, a routine political stillness that appears to affirm New Order rule despite harsh social conditions. This stillness, this lack of incident, no doubt contributes to Indonesia's position of essential invisibility (save for typical touristic coverage and occasional reports on the occupation of East Timor) in the international media, something of an achievement for the world's fourth most populous nation. New Order Indonesia thus seems to present itself as an ideal absence in which nothing, as it were, happens. It was in light of just such an absence, a normalized order of things seemingly devoid of political enunciation, that the 1982 election campaigns proved so compelling.

Although it is tempting at this point to shift into an account of the campaign events as they unfolded and assumed a momentum all their own,[6] here I instead introduce a half-dozen points concerning New Order elections that disclose the various but converging lines along which this absence is constituted. I do so as a strategy for introducing the broader contours of this book: the genealogical lines of discourse articulating issues of origins, authenticity, identity, customary practice, tradition, and similar constructs so apparently cultural in nature. The book traces these lines *back,* from colonial-era sources, across the discontinuity opened by the Indonesian revolution in the late 1940s and closed by Soeharto's seizure of control in 1965–66, to postcolonial origins in the New Order present.

The first point concerning the elections is simply this: they are always won by the government party with striking statistical precision. The elections are not simply manipulated; these victories display a special regularity, a regularity that discloses a normalized process whereby politics is, in effect, depoliticized as New Order security is commemorated. The government party is not defined as a political party per se but as a "functionary group" (*golongan karya*). Its status is in contradistinction to the two official quasi-opposition "political parties," or *partai politik,* where the word *politik* is marked by a sinister tonality acquired after the political killings of the mid-1960s that ushered in the Soeharto regime. A vote for the government group—defined as *the* apolitical choice—thus represents an avoidance of the implications of politik. New Order elections are regularly won by the government group and each win is termed a *sukses* (success). The uncanny certainty of these successes is implicit in

[6] For such an account, see John Pemberton, "Notes on the 1982 General Election in Solo," *Indonesia* 41 (1986): 1–22.

the government's campaign imperative to *mensukseskan* the elections (to "success" them) which means, in essence, to secure a victory already scored. For many Indonesian voters in 1982, a string of such successes informed their electoral memory all the way back to childhood. And local government officials could note, matter-of-factly, that elections were held in order that the requirements of democracy (*demokrasi*) be fulfilled.

The second point derives, in part, from the first. Because of the very regularity of these events, the government declared the 1982 election a *Pesta Demokrasi,* a phrase that was translated in the foreign press as "Festival of Democracy." Although this translation might suggest Bakhtinian possibilities of the carnivalesque, the special ambience conveyed by the Indonesian/Javanese term *pesta* was much closer to that of formal receptions associated with public ceremonies and domestic rituals. To Javanese ears, *Pesta Demokrasi* sounds rather like a "Formal Democracy Reception." It was, no doubt, in this spirit that President Soeharto anticipated the 1982 elections by addressing the opening ceremonies of the National Conference of Governors, District Heads, and Mayors with the following thought: "We must perceive the General Election as a grand 'pesta demokrasi,' as a use of democratic rights which is responsible and is absolutely not turned into something that makes us tense and holds us in its clutches."[7] Central Javanese administrators dutifully acted as responsible local hosts for what soon came to be thought of as an *upacara nasional,* a "national ritual," or as one official enthusiastically put it, an *upacara kolosal,* a ritual of "colossal" proportions, a national life-cyle rite. And the 1982 elections were indeed read by many Indonesians through precisely this sort of ritual gloss.

Yet although this form of ritual processing is designed to bypass "something that makes us tense and holds us in its clutches," Indonesian election campaigning rarely runs as smoothly as all that. This brings me to the third point: numerous so-called campaign incidents occur in the weeks preceding election day, incidents of violence and arrests, sometimes arising from partisan acts of intimidation and aggression by campaign leaders but more often triggered by the inevitable accidents of mobile campaigning.[8] For the scene of real campaign movement in Indonesia is city streets. During what the government refers to as the "cam-

[7] *Buku Pelengkap II Pemilihan Umum 1982* (Jakarta: Lembaga Pemilihan Umum, 1983), pp. 39–40.

[8] A more detailed analysis of the various contexts and motives informing these incidents appears in Pemberton, "1982 General Election in Solo," passim.

paign season," huge crowds of Indonesians repeatedly form in the streets, not only cyclists or campaign participants, but spectators who are potentially mobile, poised as if waiting for some incident to rush toward, en masse or, as Javanese would have it, *gumrubyug,* the undeniable sound of a crowd on the move—Gumrubyug!—propelled by an obsessiveness all its own. The possibility of such a movement frightens government officials. During the 1982 campaigns, even the prematurely gray chief of New Order security forces confessed, "The climate of that crowd is what made my hair turn white . . . the crowd always makes me nervous."[9]

Yet again—point four—incidents and crowds are thoroughly anticipated by the government and are routinely termed *ekses,* a natural precipitant of campaign seasons. Indeed, such ekses is completely *necessary* for the institution of electoral orderliness. Sukses represents all that ekses is not. At the same time, sukses is itself repeatedly demonstrated by the government throughout the campaign season as security forces periodically remove various forms of emerging ekses. This is the logic by which sukses is systematically secured, but such logic may have reverse implications for crowds of spectators. Although security forces stationed at intersections along a campaign route act as representatives of a state of security and order, their very presence simultaneously implies the opposite, a threatened state, the possibility of security's dissolution.

This sense of possibility brings me to the fifth and in some respects most significant point concerning New Order elections: the way rumors circulate. Rumors carry the stories of incidents in a way that portends the spread, "like fire throughout Java," as Solonese put it, of further incidents. During the 1982 campaigns, as such stories began to spread, they increasingly referred to an approaching *sa'at,* a moment when something might happen. What that moment meant, exactly, was left undefined, but the sense of its possibility gained momentum. Such a moment might have resembled the one that confronted the Marcos regime during its national elections a few years later although in Java the rumored moment was never really spoken about in explicitly political terms, that is, as the victory of an opposition party. Instead, campaign rumors were filled with the sense that the election process itself would somehow crash before election day, a sense that carried with it all the fascination of an enormous political traffic accident.

In Indonesia, however, an outcome of this sort—the derailing of elections—has never materialized. And that fact brings me to the last point by way of the final rumor that circulated on election eve in 1982:

[9] *Tempo,* March 27, 1982, p. 18.

"the moment has passed." In the weeks that followed the election, one rarely if ever heard references to the voting or to campaign incidents. When I asked what, in retrospect, had happened, the response was "the election seemed lively enough" or "it was basically a success" or most often, "nothing happened, nothing at all, don't worry." The much-rumored moment had simply passed by, and any political momentum I might have read into the campaign events appeared to have evaporated unrealized. It was as if the whole business had just never happened. The only explicitly postelection signs were official *syukuran* (thanksgiving) ceremonies where bone-marrow porridge was consumed, people said, "in order to restore strength," knit together social fractures, and bring to a conclusion a successfully completed, self-consciously "ritual" (*upacara*) event, in this case, Election '82. As newspapers so aptly put it, "normal life" (*kehidupan normal*) had returned, that distinctly New Order state of idealized absence in which nothing, as I noted at the outset, appears to happen.

Focused primarily on Central Java, the point of origin for many of the Jakarta elite's ruling fantasies and home to millions of contemporary Indonesians, the present book is a critical ethnographic and historical exploration of the discursive space through which this idealized absence is articulated, an absence contained within normal life. As such, the book is not an analysis of military repression[10] but an examination of a far more ambiguous, interiorized form of repression that makes the apparent normality of everyday life conceivable, desirable. As formidable as the New Order's more forceful means of suppression may be, they do not, I believe, fully account for the Soeharto regime's quarter-century of essentially undisturbed rule.[11] (That they do not was dramatically evident during the 1982 election campaigns as crowds of spectators and mobile campaigners enthusiastically ignored security regulations and regularly confronted and bypassed, en masse, military security forces.) Nor is this book an explicit analysis of trauma produced by the killings in 1965–66 surrounding the advent of the New Order or even the terrifying recollections of those killings. Contemporary Central Java is not Haiti, not East Timor.

"Terror," my *American Heritage Dictionary* notes, is "intense, overpowering fear." How, then, has the trauma of 1965–66 become brack-

[10] For an introduction to the Soeharto regime's tactics of repression, see Southwood and Flanagan, *Indonesia: Law, Propaganda, and Terror,* passim.

[11] I say this partly in light of Indonesia's huge population and *relatively* small armed forces and partly in anticipation of my argument concerning more muted forms of repression.

eted within the space that Michel de Certeau and others have identified as everyday practice in such a way that the terror of recollected fear is displaced, thus guaranteeing the appearance of a normal life?[12] How does such a life manifest itself? How is it secured as sukses under conditions that elsewhere provoke overt opposition? And how, despite the unsettling climate of campaign crowds that turned the New Order security chief's hair white, did the momentum of mass movement simply vanish on election day as if on its own accord? Given the peculiar order that now reigns in Central Java, this book is concerned less with a culture of terror than with a relatively muted form of terror that may become culture: the repression of fear that customarily secures, over time, an appearance of normal life.

In the aftermath of the 1982 election campaign events, I turned my attention, now redoubled, to just those topics that the momentum of gumrubyug politics had momentarily rendered irrevelant—to the conventionally cultural topics like ritual, customary practice, and evocations of tradition that had initially formed the focus of my research proposal. And I did so knowing that some variant of the concept of culture is often invoked by anthropologists and others as that which might encompass and perhaps even transcend political interests, as that which always already accounts for what happens or, in the case of Indonesia, what does not. This form of cultural interpretation is, in fact, especially characteristic of ethnographies of Central Java, where analysts have meditated at great length on models of the exemplary center, hierarchical systematics of language and etiquette, ritual structures of cosmological balance, and similar formulations of orderliness so quintessentially cultural in their apparent durability. Thus, for example, an anthropologist employing symbols with "roots in the 'cosmic order' of old Java" to interpret New Order elections has suggested that these "national elections might be seen as 'a rite with the purpose of restoring the wholeness of chaotic society and nature.' The chaos which had become manifest in a terrifying way during the campaign had to be overcome."[13] This form of essentialized cultural accounting, however, was not at all what I had in mind as I returned to my research topic proper and

[12] Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

[13] N. G. Schulte Nordholt, "The Indonesian Elections: A National Ritual," in *Man, Meaning, and History: Essays in Honour of H. G. Schulte Nordholt,* ed. R. Schefold, J. W. Schoorl, and J. Tennekes (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, Verhandelingen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde), 89 (1980): 181–82.

the events of the 1982 campaigns disappeared, without a trace, within the busy stillness to which Central Javanese have become so accustomed.

Instead, I was compelled to examine the ways in which the appearance of quiet and order since Soeharto's seizure of control is an effect—both an effected result and a representational effect—of a relatively enigmatic politics founded upon routine explicit reference to "traditional values" (*nilai-nilai tradisional*), "cultural inheritance" (*warisan kebudayaan*), "ritual events" (upacara), and similar New Order expressions that bear an acute sense of social stability. Indeed, one of the most distinctive features of New Order rule is the remarkable extent to which a rhetoric of culture enframes political will, delineates horizons of power. The 1982 national election and subsequent elections have been staged, after all, as cultural representations: "Festivals of Democracy." What is overlooked by anthropological interpretation that would treat New Order elections essentially as "a rite with the purpose of restoring the wholeness of chaotic society and nature"—a form of interpretation that, through culture, attempts to transcend political interests—is the sense that these elections are highly political events precisely *because* they are treated, by the Soeharto regime, in patently "ritual" terms.

Such explicitly cultural New Order gesturing confounds common anthropological assumptions of an underlying cultural order, assumptions that all too easily wind up supporting, in a word, sukses. The power of an indigenous discourse so self-consciously concerned with what constitutes "authentic" (*asli*) Javanese culture, with a "tradition" (*tradisi*) that must be preserved at all costs, operates to recuperate the past within a framework of recovered origins that would efface, for the sake of cultural continuity, a history of social activism from the late 1940s to the mid-1960s. In doing so, it discloses not so much the effects of culture per se but the force of what might be called, refashioning Foucault, the culture effect: the production of a knowledge, that called "culture," as certain of its own assumptions as it is devoted to recovering the horizons of its power by containing that which would appear otherwise. In light of the unnerving convergence between anthropological disciplinary interests in culture and repressive interests like those manifested under New Order conditions, such an effect necessarily has numerous implications for one who would speak culturally, whether as ethnographer or informant. My intention here is not to indict the discipline of anthropology as a uniquely pernicious field of modern knowledge—one could scan, for example, departments of history, sociology, linguistics, musicology, and cultural studies for similar culturalist assumptions—but to recognize in

anthropology a particularly appropriate site for exploring these implications. To this end, I turn to several specific considerations concerning New Order discourse and practice, then to questions of anthropological inquiry and ethnographic inscription, and, finally, to issues of origins, colonial/postcolonial temporalities, and the writing of history.

There is no doubt that the "successing" of New Order national events such as the Festival of Democracy depends, to a significant extent, on the everyday sense of customary orderliness and stability that has accompanied the post-1965 emergence of a cultural discourse routinely anchored in constructs like "tradition," "origins," and "ritual." It would be a mistake, however, to imagine that this discourse emerged as the product of some Machiavellian ruse in which power is essentially legitimized by reference to "traditional culture" (*kebudayaan tradisional*) as a means of social control. For the discursive effect of things "traditional" extends well beyond such a ruse by refocusing attention on just those concerns that New Order rulers assume they *themselves* are serving. That is, dominant New Order authorities are themselves committed to, obsessively devoted to, the idea of a traditional culture, "particularly"—to borrow their own phrasing (see Chap. 4)—a traditional Javanese culture. And although the material resources with which they pursue such an obsession obviously are greater than those accessible to most Javanese, the means of the pursuit, the logic of the obsession, remains, through "tradition," strikingly similar. Indeed, part of the appeal of notions like "shared traditional values," or better yet, "cultural inheritance," is the implicit displacement of issues of class, of power, of rulers versus ruled. Thus, the enframing of political will that I noted a moment ago is not simply a matter of power imposed from above but a far more pervasive effect produced through the customary appearance of "tradition" itself, particularly through practices now recollected and executed throughout New Order Java as instantiations of "traditional ritual" performance, or as the supremely modern Indonesian expression would have it, *upacara tradisional.*

The real power of the culture effect operates, then, at points far beyond the obvious formal boundaries of state institutions as everyday customary practices appear to present themselves as just the kind of observances that such institutions are dedicated to preserving. For this reason, in the more strictly ethnographic sections of the present book I am concerned less with official policies of the Indonesian Department of Education and Culture than with the Javanese culture that this department would find most recognizable as an object for preservationist attention. In those sections I am interested in that which presents itself as a manifestation of

what is assumed to be, in New Order and anthropological discourse alike, local culture: an object of ethnographic desire that no sooner discloses its contradictions—local to whom, for whom?—than it bypasses such contradictions in the name of culture. The book thus is fundamentally concerned with what might be *unrecognizable* as "tradition," with whatever might possibly threaten, even exceed, the ever-extending discursive boundaries circumscribing "Javanese culture" or, perhaps, any formulation of culture as such. I will return to these sorts of possibility after first noting several shifts in practical specifics associated with events now readily identified in Indonesia as "traditional."

Within practices involving tutelary spirits crucial to a village's autonomy, in New Order Java one discovers a shift away from the discrete significance of individually empowered village guardian spirits—particular spirits with ominously literal proper names like Tangled Whiskers or Grandma Burdened—and toward the sense of abstracted cultural power posed as a singularly dominant force; offerings now are made quite matter-of-factly expressly on behalf of "tradition" or, more precisely, *tradisi* itself. As the specific peculiarities and practices associated with these spirits become displaced by the generalized demands of "tradition," Central Javanese villagers are less certain of exactly what is required to deal with these spirits. In acutely concrete terms, they are less clear about what offerings to prepare. Formerly, three cigars and a bottle of gin were certain to satisfy Tangled Whiskers; now it is no longer obvious when an offering for the sake of maintaining a generalized "tradition" is truly complete (*lengkap*) or that it ever could be. This haunting sense of incompleteness so pervasive in New Order cultural discourse has the effect, then, of motivating an almost endless production of offerings, a constant rearticulation of things cultural, in an attempt to make up for what may have been left out in the process of recovering "tradition." Or, as I suggest in Chapter 6, tradisi itself has emerged as a kind of meta-spook endowed with a profound appetite that virtually guarantees the reproduction of devotedly cultural desires, that is, the desire for culture.

A similar New Order shift toward a sense of abstracted power demanding continuous recognition and supplication is particularly evident in the realm of ascetic practice. Here the language of asceticism has been converted from Low Javanese commands once actively directed at a world of spirits to produce powers in material form—amulets and other tangible boons—into polite High Javanese prayers of supplication at mausoleums of legendary rulers. Because these prayers are expressed in the most general terms, for overall blessings and security, supplicants can rarely be sure whether blessings are later bestowed or not. Only in the

most dramatic cases—a sudden windfall profit or an incapacitating motorcycle accident—can they be certain, for better or worse, of the results. The uncertainty attached to requests for routinely elusive blessings motivates repeated acts of supplication and, thus, reiterates the logic of the meta-spook, the compulsion of "tradition." Framed in the eerie light of such compulsion, ascetic practice now flourishes in New Order times in a way that it never did before.

Running somewhat parallel to this general shift toward abstracted cultural authority and the enframement of discrete practices as exemplary instances of an all-encompassing (and all-consuming) "tradition" is a concomitant shift claiming, as New Order discourse would have it, "diversity" (*keaneka ragaman*). It is only through the articulation and celebration of obvious diversity that Javanese villages, for example, are able to identify whatever might be perceived as their respective "unique" (*unik*) customs within a broader system of Indonesian cultural representations. This celebration of diversity is not surprising; cultural discourse characteristically exhibits a certain sense of variation. Taking my cue from New Order Indonesia's own "Beautiful Indonesia"-in-Miniature cultural theme park (Taman Mini "Indonesia Indah"), I tend to think of this cultural diversification—the dedicated, unitary recuperation of difference within a representational framework of the local—as the Mini-ization of Indonesia or, for the purposes of this book, of Java.

The idea of Mini, as this vast theme park on the outskirts of Jakarta is familiarly known, came to the park's prime creator and visionary, Mrs. Soeharto, quite suddenly during a visit to Disneyland just before the first New Order elections in 1971. In Chapter 4, I examine the history and implications of such a project in detail as they stretch into issues of colonial origins, postcolonial recollections, and postmodern possibilities. Here, I would simply note that the moment of Mini's conception came in the wake of the events of 1965–66, events that severely disrupted village practices and years that subsequently served as the cataclysmic background of politik against which recovered tradisi would appear desirable not only to the First Lady but, most significantly, to many Javanese villagers as well. Thus, the power of Mini-ization is, again, not simply a matter of force dressed in cultural guise and imposed from above but an effect continuously constituted at the local, as it were, level. How is it that villagers seem to *want* to locate representative customs on an ever-extending "Beautiful Indonesia" cultural mapping of Central Java? What are the horizons of such a map, the charting of the cultural imaginary? And how are those horizons systematically secured, through practice, as sitings of "tradition" distinguished from that which must remain unsited?

At issue, then, is not the force of *one* tradition that happens to be dominant, one reigning representation among a diversity of representations, but the representational force of the idiom "diversity" itself. In contemporary Java, the distinction between what may be the remnant particulars of a now unsitable past—three cigars, one bottle of gin, say—and New Order displays of an elaborate cultural diversity is more often than not highly ambiguous. This ambiguity is unsettling for anthropologists not just for practical ethnographic reasons but because the ethnographic enterprise itself is called into question; the search for conventions that might inform Javanese culture, or any culture, parallels the process of Mini-ization in many respects. It is as if the ethnographic move to document and interpret customary practices winds up cataloging "diversity" in all its myriad forms, as anthropological and New Order disciplinary interests in culture coincide, yet again.

Within this double shift in cultural discourse under New Order conditions—toward the singular authority of "tradition" demanding devoted observance on the one hand, and toward the celebration of "diversity," on the other—points of possible resistance to the power that I have called Mini-ization occasionally emerge. Certain village practices, tutelary spirits, and shamanic characters are sometimes transformed into exaggerated instances in which cultural recuperation is significantly strained. These are, of course, the very instances in which one might also look for the suppressed "moment" when something might *not* not happen in contemporary Indonesia. Many of the ethnographic passages in this book attempt to approach just such instances as fugitive signs of what some anthropologists would readily identify as resistance.

In Chapter 6, for example, I consider the fate of a relatively stubborn tutelary spirit who, on the eve of the annual celebration on his behalf in his village, appeared in the village headman's dream with one last demand: "I will not be ritualized!" From this moment in 1983 on, the annual event that otherwise would have secured the position of this village on Mini's extended cultural map as an exemplary representation of "local tradition," has not, in fact, occurred. What remains is a recollection of what is *not* happening, the active trace of a past that cannot be enframed and treated as "tradition." Therein might lie the peculiar power of this spirit as a shadow of the past that would move beyond the force of the culture effect in the present. But note how the very peculiarity that sustains this power seems to depend on the spirit's own vanishing—a memory recalled, but only momentarily.

To read into such a memory a form of cultural resistance has two thoroughly imbricated consequences. On the one hand, the spirit would be effectively repositioned within just the kind of framework—an in-

stance of *cultural* resistance, an ideally marginal form of diversity—from which the spirit might have escaped. On the other hand, it is precisely the appearance of absence, a conspicuous blank space in the cultural map, that produces a sense of incompleteness that motivates the New Order certainty that "traditional" village customs must be recovered and maintained. For points of possible resistance are just the points across which Mini-ization moves to establish, as it extends, its field of power. As such, these points tend to reaffirm New Order cultural visions and the assumption of a customary normal life by supplementing—whether by momentary contrast because of their apparent abnormality or through eventual recuperation as signs of far-reaching diversity—the sense of an *underlying,* stabilized cultural order.

The privileging of stability and order as dominant characteristics of Javanese culture has an ethnographic history whose assumptions, in many respects, anticipate those of tradisi in New Order cultural discourse. Underpinning this history is the highly celebrated concept *slamet,* "which the Javanese defines," noted Clifford Geertz in the 1950s, "with the phrase '*gak ana apa-apa*'—'there isn't anything,' or, more aptly, 'nothing is going to happen (to anyone)'."[14] Manifested through *slametan* practices—Javanese communal events usually described as ritual feasts by ethnographers, events associated with a variety of domestic and villagewide observances ranging from weddings to annual preparations for tutelary spirits—slamet is supposed to reflect a state of being that is at once ideally incidentless and religiously neutral. Commenting on these practices in his seminal ethnography *The Religion of Java,* Geertz observes: "The *slametan* represents a reassertion and reinforcement of the general cultural order and its power to hold back the forces of disorder. . . . In a subdued dramatic form, it states the values that animate traditional Javanese peasant culture: the mutual adjustment of interdependent wills, the self-restraint of emotional expression, and the careful regulation of outward behavior."[15]

As an expression devoted to general cultural order, slametan would ritually circumvent the implications of times of disorder. Such times include, as I suggested earlier, the Indonesian revolution in the 1940s and the events of the mid-1960s accompanying Soeharto's rise to power. In fact, the highly politicized decades spanning 1945–66 suggest that slamet was possibly inappropriate as a guiding concept. It was perhaps in light

[14] Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), p. 14.

[15] Ibid., p. 29.

of the tensions of the 1950s that slamet expressed a "wished-for state" as Geertz noted at the time. Yet ethnographic valorization of slametan practices as reinforcements of a general cultural order occludes other interpretations of these and related practices explicitly associated with fertility, reproduction, contestation, and dissemination (considered at various points in Chapter 5 through 7) as it tends to underwrite a model political order in the name of culture. The now common interpretation of slamet as a Javanese key to cultural order coincides almost perfectly with New Order discourse. For with post-1965 "security" a culture of slamet would seem to have been achieved as the term *slamet* is routinely linked to other terms associated with the maintenance of the state security apparatus. Within the discourse of slamet now appear, for example, *tata* (order), *tertib* (orderly), and *aman* (safe, secure), with *keamanan* referring to security forces. Older resonances of slamet as a condition of prosperity have given way to an expression that describes an essentially negative, interference-free state in which nothing happens—slamet! What appears to remain is a purely *tradisional* culture free of political and historical implications, a culture dedicated to, as if by nature, its own celebration.

How then might one write about such a culture without simply reaffirming the very recuperative powers that one would critique? Much of this book represents an effort at providing not so much a definitive answer but a sustained response to that question. Initially, I have retraced the particular histories of practices conventionally reified through a rhetoric of ritual, custom, and, perhaps, practice. Such a strategy seemed, at first, relatively straightforward. In Chapters 5 through 7, I detail specific shifts that have occurred since 1965 in domestic and villagewide observances associated with events like weddings and annual harvests, or encounters with spirits, or otherworldly ascetic pursuits. Part of the point of these historical reflections is to begin to destabilize dominant assumptions in New Order cultural discourse that contain and enframe these events as customary instances of "traditional rituals" (upacara tradisional), a discourse that effectively effaces the past(s) such customary behavior would appear to represent.

But that is only part. For no sooner is this kind of critique initiated, than it begins to turn back on itself, troubling its own moves by much the same logic that might question New Order discourse. What happens when one discovers in Javanese texts, for example, that before the early twentieth century the modern Javanese/Indonesian term that translates *ritual*—that is, *upacara*—did not refer to a form of behavior at all (much less symbolic behavior), but to an object or objects (royal regalia)? What might

have begun as a textual search for evidence of earlier kinds of ritual, that is, for the evidence necessary to demonstrate certain changes in ritual behavior, immediately gives way to questioning the status of *ritual* itself in Javanese studies and, by extension, anywhere anthropologists and others see fit to deploy such a term. In Chapter 4, I return to the historical emergence of *upacara* in early twentieth-century Java of the Dutch East Indies, and do so in reference to Talal Asad's extremely suggestive retracing of similar shifts in the meaning of *ritual* in English.[16] Thus in response to a question such as "Were there, then, rituals in Java before the early twentieth century?" my answer would be no. There were, of course, weddings and coronations and well-mannered conventions for greeting foreign dignitaries, as nineteenth-century Javanese texts clearly detail, but these specifics were not enframed then as "ritual." And without that frame, profound differences emerge between those very specifics and what later would be "ritually" recalled.

It is not necessary to invoke Javanese texts from a colonized past, however, to explore how a critique of New Order cultural discourse implicitly questions the anthropological grounds upon which such a critique is based. For an attempt to identify that which might somehow escape the power of the culture effect—whether articulated historiographically in terms of what came before or ethnographically in terms of difference—is already implicated in that questioning, as my reconsiderations of "tradition" and "diversity" have suggested. When my interrogation of the politics of New Order cultural discourse led me to locate historically what I referred to as practices so that I might demonstrate a critical shift since 1965, even then I was deferring several more basic questions. Did I simply mean to substitute "practice" for "traditional ritual"? No, not exactly. I do not intend in this book to formulate a new model of Javanese social practice; to do so would essentially translate the terms of enframement within which Javanese might still be contained. Yet because threshold comparativist terms other than those anthropological constructs immediately implicated in New Order discourse are necessary to examine the margins of that discourse, I employ these other terms (*practice, observance, occasion, event,* and so on), in the chapters that follow, with a certain systematic indiscriminacy. I do this, in part, to avoid what otherwise might become a too facile assimilation of those margins. But I also do so en route to a more fundamental question:

[16] Talal Asad, "Towards a Genealogy of the Concept of Ritual," in *Vernacular Christianity: Essays in the Social Anthropology of Religion Presented to Godfrey Lienhardt,* ed. W. James and D. H. Johnson (Oxford: JASO, 1988), pp. 73–87.

a shift then from *what?* How does one invoke supposedly very different worlds to demonstrate such a shift? And how does one do so *without* ascribing to those other worlds a modern form of totality—for what could be more quintessentially modern than "tradition"?—one would look beyond?

In *Colonising Egypt,* a superb study of the power to colonize, Timothy Mitchell introduces examples drawn from Pierre Bourdieu's account of Kabyle house design (examples cited by Mitchell for the sake of highlighting changes in the ordering of the world that would accompany and facilitate colonial rule) with the following reservation:

> Because the purpose of such examples is to make visible our own assumptions about the nature of order by contrasting them with a kind of order whose assumptions are different, I run the risk of setting up this other as the very opposite of ourselves. Such an opposite, moreover, would appear inevitably as a self-contained totality, and its encounter with the modern West would appear, again inevitably, as its rupturing and disintegration. These sorts of self-contained, pre-capitalist totalities acquire the awful handicap, as Michael Taussig has remarked, of having to satisfy our yearning for a lost age of innocence. Such consequences, though perhaps inevitable, are undesired and unintended.[17]

On the Subject of "Java" runs a similar risk, or series of risks, of setting up another world that might lie beyond the power of the culture effect and, thus, be so recognizably different that it would have to be acknowledged as a self-contained totality: another time, another epistemological space, another culture. The book runs these risks while working through two very different sets of materials—ethnographic, on the one hand, historiographic, on the other—in an effort to defer the inevitability which Mitchell foresaw.

First, the ethnographic. In Chapters 4 through 7, I examine the emergence of cultural discourse under New Order conditions and retrace the effects of such a discourse as they have been secured within a framework of "tradition." I delineate the contours of what has been contained within this framework, by indicating what has become marginal, displaced. By identifying the marginal, however, I risk valorizing margins in such a way that they could appear as yet another form of recognizable "diversity" or, at the other extreme, appear so utterly unrecognizable that they come to represent a total difference, a generic other. In my attempt to

[17] Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 49.

write through and, perhaps, beyond this sort of dilemma, the risk remains obvious.

For example, partially to counter the dominant claims of cultural orderliness exhibited in New Order slametan rites, in the ethnographic chapters I consider events known to Javanese as *rebutan,* struggles among rivals fighting over power-laden objects, contestations of desire whose points of intense focus range from the charged remnants of an offering given a tutelary spirit to, in the context of Javanese historical chronicles, the king's throne itself. Citing rebutan as a counterexample, I thus risk positioning these struggles as yet another recognizable form of practice, indeed, a form so radically opposed to slametan practices that they might be thought to have once constituted, when they were far more numerous, a polar opposite for slametan within a broader structure of Javanese culture. But to think of rebutan struggles in this manner would, of course, mean reinserting them within just the kind of cultural enframement that such struggles might exceed. In practice, acts of rebutan appear as disruptive *events,* incidents of sheer conflict (*konflik*) ultimately intolerable for New Order security, unrecognizable as "tradition."

Moments of rebutan implicitly trouble, however, even the distinction between "event" and "tradition." For rebutan occur within many occasions emblematic of "tradition"—village annual observances, acts of ascetic pursuit, and, sometimes, weddings. Emerging from within such celebrated scenes of "tradition," rebutan remain, thus, as uncanny traces of what "tradition" is not. Although rebutan occur less and less frequently, the attraction of rebutan, that is, the tendency to rebut, still lingers. To the extent that one might want to identify in this tendency the remnant of an essentially cultural response, the world it would represent is fast vanishing, becoming just the sort of lost age of which Taussig warned. And this exposes, in turn, a modern yearning I would rather leave partly unfulfilled, not entirely satisfied by the thought of culture.

The same could be said concerning the aforementioned tutelary spirit who now annually absents himself from a village celebration that would have acknowledged his "traditional" power, his cultural authority. Vanishing, yet recalling what is not happening, the spirit remains not as evidence of culture, not quite, but rather as a *partial* presence in the sense invoked by Homi Bhabha in his writings on the logic of mimicry within colonial discourse, a force that simultaneously mimics and menaces.[18] Such a spirit haunts cultural constructs by being a shadow of the past

[18] Homi Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse," *October* 28 (1984): 125–33.

"tradition" would represent, while it disavows "tradition" altogether, or more precisely, puts "tradition" in the position of being disavowed. It is not ongoing cultural resistance but something more ephemeral, a sighting as transient as the trace of a spirit that has vanished, *just* vanished—not a lost age, but something less graspable, potentially more startling.

Such ephemeral traces necessarily inform the margins of *On the Subject of "Java."* If they appear somewhat elusive in these introductory comments, that may be because they can only be approached by a more sustained attempt to write toward the edges of cultural discourse and through the very materiality of ethnographic detail. Moreover, these sorts of possibility are themselves extremely elusive under New Order conditions where the discursive effect of culture, the very force of Mini-ization, is so pervasive and carries so many practical implications for an everyday life customarily reiterated as normal. Precisely in light of these conditions, I have foregone a certain yearning to locate, definitively, unquestionable sites of resistance. Yet particular spirits and moments of conflict disavowing or disavowed by "tradition" do emerge in the chapters that follow, reminding one that cultural discourse must have its limits. The emergence and effects of such a discourse—that inscribing itself on the subject of "Java"—remains, in turn, my central concern in this book. To introduce how Java came to appear in quotation marks in the book's title, I turn now to the other set of materials that I alluded to earlier, materials that raise explicit historiographical questions that might very well have provided the point of departure for this introduction.

During the initial four-months of my 1980s research in Central Java when I was banned from active fieldwork for the sake of "successing" the 1982 elections, much of my time not consumed by Festival of Democracy events was spent within archives belonging to Javanese royal palaces whose mideighteenth-century establishment first put the city of Solo on the historical map, sanctums of knowledge sealed off from what has become the modern noise of Solonese everyday life by a labyrinth of colonial-white walls. Here is stored a vast reserve of textual traces from more than two centuries of Java's past, or better yet, pasts. Housed in these archives are almost three-quarter million pages comprising some five thousand texts composed by Javanese and penned in Javanese script. As Nancy Florida reveals in volume 1 of her remarkable *Javanese Literature in Surakarta Manuscripts,* these are manuscripts whose subject matter ranges from historical chronicles in verse or prose to sufi speculative lyrics, compendia of rules governing court etiquette, and scenarios for shadow-puppet theater; from volumes commemorating the arrivals and departures of Dutch colonial officials to treatises on divination, manuals

on the preparation of offerings, and illuminated catalogs of magical talismans; from inscriptions of prophecy to lists detailing the contents of the king's liquor cabinet.[19]

It was in just such scriptoria that I first encountered, as noted, the relatively recent emergence of *upacara* as an indigenous term translating *ritual,* an epistemological construct that enframed certain events as a form of symbolic behavior. And it was here, too, that I first began to get a real sense of the extraordinary impact of Dutch rule in Central Java, from the early years of Dutch East India Company intervention and the subsequent establishment of a formal colonial government in the Indies in 1800 across a brief British interregnum (1811–16), until the arrival of the Japanese in 1942 and the collapse of the Dutch East Indies empire. Traces of Dutch colonial power were, inescapably, everywhere in these archives.

Alongside Javanese texts were other texts printed in Dutch that variously organized the colonial state of affairs into well-ruled compendia of financial records, treatises on native manners and customs, programs for social reform, declarations of government regulations, reports from incumbent East Indies officials, and similar remains of an eventually abandoned civilizing mission. Albums of photographs, many oxidized with age into ghostly silhouettes, presented scenes of a high colonial past often recalled nostalgically through the haunting compound linguistic expression *tempo* (Dutch) *doeloe* (Malay), "the old days," "former times." Scenes from early twentieth-century colonial exhibitions displayed, for example, the commercial goods of colonial entrepreneurs, native artifacts, and "folk" performances in a manner that seemed to anticipate future exhibitions like those of the "Beautiful Indonesia"-in-Miniature cultural theme park. Perhaps most significant, however, the inscribed contours of a Dutch colonial presence were everywhere to be found within Javanese manuscripts. In many texts, the contours of that presence loomed large as, for example, a Solonese king saluted the governor-general of the Netherlands Indies with a glass of Madeira. In other texts that focused on what would seem more typically indigenous concerns—divinational calculations, for instance—that presence assumed the quasi-invisible form of a Dutch watermark fatefully recalling the origins of the very paper against whose grain Javanese scribes were writing: a watermark like GOD ZY MET ONS, that is, GOD IS WITH US.

[19] Nancy K. Florida, *Javanese Literature in Surakarta Manuscripts,* vol. 1: *Introduction and Manuscripts of the Karaton Surakarta* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1993).

The force of certainty imprinted in such a watermark poses a question of alternatives. How might one write a historical account of Central Java's colonial past that fully acknowledges the force of Dutch rule without reducing the native subjects of that past to the status of mere victims increasingly overpowered by the technologies of a modern knowledge imposed from without, a knowledge that effectively invested theological certainty into the secular cause of a civilizing mission? Much recent work has explored the contradictory ambivalences lying at the heart of such a mission whose "epic intention," recalls Bhabha, was "'human and not wholly human' in the famous words of Lord Rosebery, 'writ by the finger of the Divine'," or, as Bhabha rephrases it, "not quite / not white."[20] Such work examines the logic of the mission itself and the colonizing need constantly to rearticulate lines of difference as more recognizably "civilized," well-disciplined subjects threatened the distinction between human and not wholly human. Mitchell's work on Egypt moves similarly to turn the grammar of colonization back on itself, thereby exposing a sense of alterity that must be contained as other, a representation of difference constantly reproduced by the "machinery of truth." Mitchell's move is particularly provocative because it suggests that the colonizing effect within the reproduction of difference holds true not just for patently Orientalist discourse but for any representation of difference as such, including that which constitutes much anthropological discourse. Yet what if one still attempted a necessarily partial representation, informed by the possibilities of its own colonizing effect while pursuing its own limitations? To ask such a question is to rephrase earlier queries concerning the limitations of diversity and the possibilities of ethnographic inscription. It also returns to Mitchell's reservations about citing the Kabyle organization of space in order to demonstrate, through a summarily brief contrast, the impact of colonial conquest. What, then, might a more *sustained* chance at ethnographic inquiry into historiographical issues produce?

It is significant that many analyses of the colonizing mission have produced their insights by working primarily within the language and textual sources of the colonizer. Although these analyses may be referenced with terms from the native vernacular(s) that facilitated such a mission, their focus, quite understandably, remains the contradictory ambivalences within the very grammar of conquest. Yet there are, of course, other kinds of sources informing colonial discourse, colonial encounter: extensive texts in Tamil such as those explored by Nicholas Dirks in his

[20] Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man," pp. 126, 132.

acute critique of the construct "caste" in colonial India,[21] texts in Tagalog such as those informing Vicente Rafael's exceptional study of Christian conversion in Tagalog society.[22] In turning to Javanese manuscripts whose dates of composition range from the mideighteenth to the midtwentieth centuries, I do not intend to present these sources simply as evidence for the "other" point of view which, when combined with that framing the colonizer's vision, might eventually provide a completed portrait of colonial encounter. I do not intend, that is, to treat the manuscripts simply as representative traces of another culture increasingly overtaken by a colonizing power coming from without. Locating these sources within a fundamentally cultural framework would miss the critical significance of anthropology's trajectory as a discipline whose ethnographic concerns and institutions may be retraced (as Talal Asad and others noted early on) to the offices of colonial conquest.[23] It would also miss a significant ambivalence sustained within many Javanese manuscripts concerning the origins of what would appear to lie always just beyond the limits of colonial conquest, a figuration of difference that moves discursively, anticipating its future recalling as a sign of culture, that is, the figure of "Java."

In Chapters 1 through 3, I retrace the outlines of this figure in Javanese texts, beginning with the mideighteenth-century founding of the Solonese palace within whose walls many of the manuscripts cited were composed. Inscriptions chronicling the founding of this palace—the Palace of Surakarta, as it is properly called, which thus formally designates the city of Solo as Surakarta—already contain a certain contradiction of origins: the establishment of a native kingdom through Dutch East India Company intervention. Although this was not the first such kingdom founded through Company intervention, the novel process by which this kingdom was created was repeatedly recalled as an ideal means for recollecting origins, for recovering the contradictions of "Java"'s own creation. In contradistinction to the increasingly undeniable and unnerving presence of Dutch intrusion into Surakartan affairs, the discursive figure of "Java" gradually appeared in palace texts to represent much that such a foreign presence could *not* be. Yet this potentially other presence—this "Javanese" figuration—did not assume the full ontological weight of what

[21] Nicholas B. Dirks, *The Hollow Crown: Ethnohistory of an Indian Kingdom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

[22] Vicente L. Rafael, *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society under Early Spanish Rule* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1988).

[23] Talal Asad, ed., *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* (New York: Humanities Press, 1975).

accompanied its counterpart in assertions like "God is with us" but instead initially defined itself in terms that were quite partial, quite specific. Its initial lines of distinction were drawn from wardrobe options: having identified a certain "Dutch fashion" or "Dutch style" (*cara Walandi*), Surakartans *then* fashioned themselves in what came to be thought of by the turn of the nineteenth century as *cara Jawi,* "Javanese style."

This sense of style, recalling as it did a sense of origins and a "Java" ideally beyond the colonial administrative reach of the Netherlands East Indies, flourished in the nineteenth century as it expanded to articulate a world of difference in terms of custom, language, literature, and so on, all the essential lines of an identity that by the early twentieth century would be recognized, in retrospect, as a typically cultural identity. My point here is not to track a natural evolution of cultural consciousness but to retrace the emergence of a discourse thoroughly suitable (through disciplinary lenses of modern hindsight) for cultural recognition *and* to locate that discourse within colonial conditions. As much as "Java" flourished in spite of such conditions, it did so also because of them. Thus when I discovered, for example, that a text entirely devoted to describing a royal wedding did not appear on archive shelves until the 1830s, my initial response—at last, a really early description of this ritual!—shifted to questions concerning why such a well-bound text devoted to ceremony, this ceremony, had emerged at all and why then. Or why, again, should a Javanese text, "Customs and Manners: The Customary Practices and Behavior of Javanese People Who Still Adhere to Superstitions," whose subject is not a specific ceremonial event, inscribe its subject as a *generalized* "Javanese person" (*tiyang Jawi*) and do so, for the first time, in the 1890s?[24] In asking such questions I have sought to reverse the certainty of cultural assumptions by examining the conditions under which such assumptions may come to appear as certain, conditions for the reproduction of "Java."

Of the authors writing on the subject of "Java," not all, of course, were Central Javanese. By the early twentieth century, a substantial archive in the field of formal Javanologie had been created by Dutch scholars with the considerable assistance of Javanese informants who also worked in Dutch. This sort of archive was typical of many colonial contexts at that time and has remained a productive source for later researchers following the leads provided by these colonial predecessors. Much work on the effects of colonial encounters has emphasized the ways in which native

[24] Ki Padmasusastra, *Tatacara: Adat Sarta Kalakuwanipun Titiyang Jawi ingkang Taksih Lumengket dhateng Gugon Tuhon* (Batavia: Kangjeng Gupremèn, 1907).

subjects gradually imitated (adopted, appropriated, incorporated, etc.) various discursive logics and practices conveyed by the colonizers, foreign logics imported from without. Although such an emphasis is understandable in light of the vast number of colonial institutions in whose service these subjects worked—institutions such as Javanologie's own Java Instituut, formally established in Surakarta in 1919, although preceded by less-grandiose enterprises—here, too, I would partially reverse assumptions.

The appearance of a world of difference manifested by the figure of "Java" in Javanese archives from the late eighteenth century on suggests that by the high Javanological times of the late nineteenth century, Dutch scholars would discover a wholly recognizable object of Orientalist desire, a subject of "Java" *already* fit for scholarly pursuit. The "Java" they were devoted to locating and documenting was, to a significant extent, already prepared, as if for them, through a figuration of difference in the Javanese archives. That this figuration occurred in contradistinction to the invasively constant, yet only partially incorporated, presence of the Dutch goes without saying. Yet this "Java" was not simply an issue of imitation and incorporation of foreign logics but a prefiguration, even anticipation, of what would become a properly Orientalist subject. The fact that Dutch scholars could refer to Javanese manuscripts devoted entirely to weddings or to the "customary practices and behavior of Javanese people" reaffirmed their certainty that culturally bound topics like weddings and customary practices really *did* exist. Conversely, through such international recognition, the Surakartans' "Java" became all the more certain of its own being.

My reflections on Javanese texts in Chapters 1 through 3, thus, are not meant to represent traces of the past as evidence for a cultural priority, nor are they intended to treat those traces as evidence of impositions from without and increasingly imitated by natives working within, not signs of culture (precolonial or otherwise), not simply inventions of tradition. Instead, these reflections are the result of an effort to move beyond the stabilizing effects informing the classic analytical dichotomization of colonial encounters in terms of within versus without, of interior versus exterior. Yet, if not culture or even alternative history—for I would no more claim that these texts constitute a counterhistory written from the other's point of view than I would identify in them signs of timeless cultural priority—then what? It is here that I must recall the origins of my interest in the origins of "Java": the conditions of New Order cultural discourse, conditions demanding that origins be repeat-

edly recovered. Although I examine at length Javanese manuscripts from several centuries past, I do so not for the sake of writing a history of, for example, nineteenth-century Java but instead in an attempt to write against the formidable flow of chronology back to a discourse on origins that informs the New Order present. This somewhat unconventional move is not, of course, a wholly novel strategy on my part. As Foucault confessed: "I would like to write the history of this prison, with all the political investments of the body that it gathers together in its closed architecture. Why? Simply because I am interested in the past? No, if one means by that writing a history of the past in terms of the present. Yes, if one means writing the history of the present."[25]

Although *On the Subject of "Java"* examines specific genealogies that articulate the power of what I have called, alluding to Foucault, the culture effect, these genealogies obviously do not return to a modern Western present but to a specific postcolonial present and New Order times, to the appearance of a cultural present that makes a figure like "Java" particularly compelling for those in Indonesia who would recoup past losses. Such an appearance also returns to questions concerning anthropological inquiry, contemporary enunciations of difference that might contain what would appear otherwise, and a history of disciplinary inscriptions founded upon the assumption of what used to be called an ethnographic present. To write toward what I referred to earlier as the edges of cultural discourse thus may very well be to have already begun writing toward a history of the present or, more precisely, toward an issue of origins where the very distinction between culture and history is itself displaced.

Perhaps no site is better suited for this in contemporary Indonesia than the city of Solo, or Surakarta. For many New Order Javanese, it is a city of origins, a siting of the past in place, a privileged locus for much that is recalled as "Javanese." Although Surakarta is not the only palace city in Central Java, this city remains particularly haunting for those dedicated to recovering a sense of what might be, somehow, "authentically Javanese" (*asli Jawa*). In Chapters 1 through 3, I work through various Surakartan manuscripts to consider how this could become the case. In Chapters 5 through 7, I examine the effects of a discourse that, through practice and under New Order conditions, reinscribes the quotation marks containing "Java," thereby securing a politics of culture. The

[25] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Penguin Books, 1982), pp. 30–31.

focus in these chapters is not just on Surakarta but more often on sites quite far from that city—in villages, in rural graveyards, in distant refuges of ascetic hermitage—as I consider how "Java" appears as that which already delimits its own horizons.

In Chapter 4, positioned as it is between the two sets of materials—archival on the one hand, ethnographic, on the other—I explore New Order efforts at refurbishing and recuperating Surakarta's crowning representation of "Java," the Palace of Surakarta, or Kraton Surakarta, and reflect on these efforts in light of parallel efforts resulting in the construction and expansion of "Beautiful Indonesia"-in-Miniature Park. In this chapter, I have purposely avoided writing a continuous history that might somehow bridge the gap between the collapse of the Dutch East Indies empire in 1942 and the advent of the Soeharto regime in 1965–66, between the last of the colonial-era archival materials I cite and the first of the New Order materials. I do not argue, for example, that the force of "tradition" in New Order times is an inevitable consequence of the royal colonial past; as noted earlier, the highly politicized decades of the 1940s–60s effectively derail such a conclusion. Yet the more distant the revolutionary times of the 1940s seem, the more attractive discursive figures like "Javanese tradition" become. My intention, thus, is that the archival and New Order materials be read across a certain discontinuity as companion studies on "Java," studies whose subjects are so recursively intertwined, as the details of Chapter 4 suggest, that they appear virtually identical.

Within each of these articulations of "Java" are specific ambivalences, however, which trouble that identity. Early twentieth century prophecies foresaw, from within the walls of the palace proper, the end of the world the Kraton Surakarta once represented, the end of "Java" with the fated passing of its king in 1939. These prophecies were, perhaps, realized in light of the events of the 1940s that followed—first the Japanese occupation, then the revolutionary struggles—leaving a colonized past behind. Later recollections of the years spanning the 1940s–60s also trouble the virtual identity one might now read into "Java." Recalling times significantly different from what came before or after, such recollections surface here and there throughout the ethnographic chapters of this book, reminding one of particular differences that might lie beyond colonized pasts, on the one hand, and New Order "tradition," on the other. They remind one, in short, that New Order "tradition" is neither a matter of sheer invention nor a necessary result of what preceded it. Yet as these prophecies and recollections are increasingly displaced by concerns with securing origins, "Java" appears to have reemerged as an ideally cultural

figure within whose shadow everyday practices assume a customary reality. And so to begin to retrace the lines of such a figure, I turn to a story of origins—the mideighteenth-century emergence of the Kraton Surakarta. And I do so, en route to a particular history of the present, by way of a 1939 celebration.

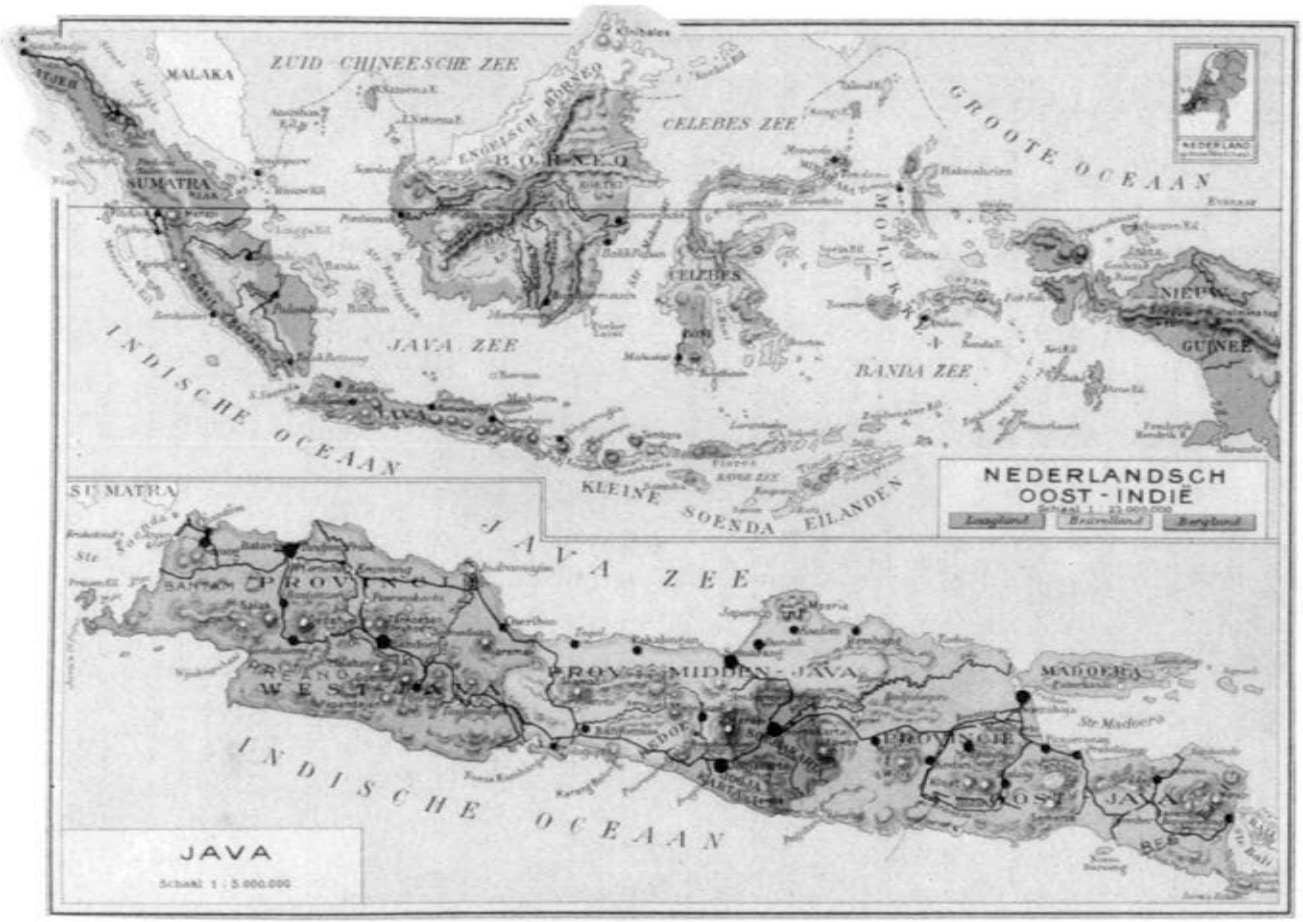
I

SEMINAL CONTRADICTIONS

FOUNDING THE PALACE OF SURAKARTA

In April 1939, the Central Javanese palace ruled by a dynasty of kings reigning under the title "Axis of the Cosmos" (Pakubuwana) celebrated its bicentennial by holding a grand night fair. A two-hundred year reign was a first in Javanese history; never before had such a dynasty managed to live in one palace for so long. The rationale behind the celebration was also a first. It had not occurred to the occupants of this palace to observe, say, a one-hundred-year commemoration in the midnineteenth century. In the past, royal commemorations were tied directly to the king himself and acknowledged the cosmologically embodied import of a king's age or the length of His Majesty's reign. Now, however, near the unexpected end of Dutch East Indies colonial rule, they celebrated the age not of a king but a kingdom and an abstracted image of kingliness soliciting, in turn, devotion to a far more generalized sense of royalty, empire, and, particularly, high culture. The site of this abstraction was the Kraton Surakarta Hadiningrat, the "Palace of Surakarta, Finest in the World."

The commemorative nightfair took over the flat ceremonial field in front of the palace, the royal *alun-alun,* for two weeks and converted the field into a fantasy city of attractions and amusements. Colonial-white



Map 1. Java in the Netherlands East Indies. From G. Prop., *Atlas van Nederland en de Indiën* (Zutphen: W. J. Thieme, 1929).

gateways and exhibition pavilions were outlined with light bulbs, transforming temporary constructions into glowing night castles. Shops and concession stands framed in "Arabic," "Minang," "Chinese," "Japanese," and other styles fashionable for commercial fairs in 1930s Java, competed as attractions. An Arabic-style booth dispensed Chinese Tiger Brand medicinal oil; the Minang-style shop displayed European lamps; imported General Electric refrigerators filled a mock pagoda. There were on-location radio programs, nightly fireworks displays, "folk" performances from the Indies, presentations of dignitaries and dancers from Japan, and a double schedule of horse racing, military drill-parading, and aerial shows. And throughout the city of Surakarta was more than an adequate supply of ceremonies, salutes, and cigars.

For the two-hundredth-year celebration, a committee of palace officials published a commemorative volume of precisely two hundred pages: "Royal Deeds" (*Sri Radya Laksana*), an official story of Surakarta kings and their state. This volume is instructive as much for what it leaves out of Surakarta history as for what it includes. Drawing on passages from eighteenth-century palace chronicles, the volume opens with a description of the Pakubuwana kingdom's move to the village of Solo in 1745, the move by which the Kraton Surakarta was founded.[1] This highly celebrated move from Kartasura (the palace's former site just ten kilometers west of Solo) is the only story of Surakarta kings and state to be found in the commemorative book. The events behind the Kartasura palace's abandonment—a complex mix of rebellions and political maneuverings involving the Chinese and Javanese populace, Kartasura royalty, and Company (the Dutch East India Company) and Madurese forces, which left the old palace in shambles—are reduced to a single slightly embarrassed expression, "turmoil in the realm" (*daharuning praja*).[2] Most of the two hundred Javanese years since the founding of Surakarta are treated in the book as little more than a series of lists: Dutch governors-general in Batavia and administrative heads assigned to

[1] *Sri Radya Laksana* draws largely on *Babad Giyanti* (The Giyanti History), a massive historical chronicle, in verse, composed in the late eighteenth century by the Surakarta author R. Ng. Yasadipura I. *Babad Giyanti* was published in four volumes in Surakarta and Yogyakarta during 1885–92; a twenty-one volume edition of *Babad Giyanti* was published in Batavia by Balé Poestaka, 1937–39. Note that the period spanning 1745–1939 marks the two hundred *Javanese* years, 1670–1870.

[2] The Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (United East India Company), or simply "Company," was established in 1602. For an introduction to this period and Kartasura's demise, see M. C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia: c. 1300 to the Present* (London: Macmillan, 1981), chap. 8.

Surakarta; Javanese kings and prime ministers; architectural changes to palace buildings and grounds. It is as if the story of the move from Kartasura to Solo, and most especially the formal ceremonial procession created by the occasion, were all that remained from the past or at least all that one really needed to know about Surakarta history.

Elaborate descriptions of this procession still routinely preface modern Indonesian commemorative publications tied, in one way or another, to the municipality of Solo. In 1983, for example, when the city's late-colonial sports arena, Sriwedari Stadium, was remodeled and then dedicated by President Soeharto as a monument commemorating Indonesia's first National Athletic Games of '48,[3] the book issued for this New Order ceremony, "Solo Develops" (*Solo Membangun*), began characteristically with the move from Kartasura and borrowed much of its description of the royal procession directly from "Royal Deeds." The 1983 introductory paragraph conveyed, however, its own aging New Order flavor:

> In reality, the ceremony for moving the Kartasura palace to Solo took the form of a procession which was complete [lengkap] with long columns of marchers. We can just imagine that all—except for the palace officials on horseback, and the king's family in the carriage Sir Garuda, and palanquins—the troops, the servants, men and women old and young, had to walk and endure a trip of almost ten kilometers. *What's more, it was a dirt road.*[4]

That ten kilometers is a relatively short distance—in contemporary Indonesia, an everyday walk for villagers carrying goods to market—is circumvented in this 1983 text as the privileged readers are invited to imagine what these historic marchers should have "endured." Just imagine, a fantastically long procession, a complete procession, which "Solo Develops" goes on to describe in devoted detail. After the 1745 procession, the next event in the history of Solo thought worthy of coverage in this New Order book does not occur until 1945 with Indonesia's Declaration of Independence. Again, it is as if the ceremonial procession *itself,* in all its celebrated completeness, somehow still holds the key to Solo's past.

[3] The first PON (Pekan Olahraga Nasional) national games were held in Solo, September 9–12, 1948, and were inspired by the Olympics in London just months before.

[4] *Solo Membangun* (Surakarta: Tim Penyusun Buku Kenang-kenangan Peresmian Proyek Pemugaran Stadion Sriwedari, 1983), p. 3 (emphasis in the original).

The Royal Progress of 1745

By eighteenth-century Javanese accounts, the February 20, 1745, procession to Solo was, indeed, a remarkable show. As king, Pakubuwana II rolled along slowly in the monstrous royal carriage of state named "Sir Venerable Eagle" (Kangjeng Kyahi Garudha, after the mythic Indic bird who carried the god Vishnu), a gift from the Dutch. The carriage was preceded by Company Commandant Baron Van Hohendorff and colleagues, members of the royal family, and palace officials attended by ceremonial parasols whose various hues of emblematic colors ranked the officials in fine gradation. Preceding the king also were several brigades of Company troops, palace religious officials, and a magical arsenal of royal *pusaka*—objects imagined to contain almost divine power and to require weekly offerings, including the sacred Sir Cengkal Baladéwa, the palace's prize measuring stick, a royal ruler based on Pakubuwana I's (r. 1704–19) measured distance of urination.[5]

The king's carriage was flanked by palace servants attired in crimson and carrying the king's *upacara,* the golden regalia of state—a crowned naga (Arda Walika), a jeweled cock (Sawung Galing), and so on—palladia signifying royal power. Directly behind the king's carriage followed the queen's palanquin surrounded by her regalia, then the princesses with their attendants followed by the palace's heirloom lances and daggers, each with its own designative parasol. Beyond these weapons came officials from the kingdom's most distant territories, and, finally, troops, marching and on horseback, numbering fifty thousand and forming a line described in the chronicles as "endless."

Booming ceremonial gongs from Javanese gamelan orchestras stationed along the road to Solo were joined by Company "music" sounded on trumpets and field drums. The thunder of all this royal noise, echoing many of the sounds familiar to the battles in the years leading to the abandonment of the Kartasura palace performed as a turbulent soundscape within which the celebrated order (tata) of the procession appeared all the more orderly. The late eighteenth-century Kraton Surakarta chronicle "The Giyanti History" (*Babad Giyanti*) recalls the moment

[5] Pusaka very often, but by no means always, take the form of a ceremonial weapon such as the daggerlike *keris.* Other kinds of classic royal pusaka include, for example, palace equipment (His Majesty's rice cooker) and relics (the petrified feces of Sultan Agung, r. 1613–46). *Cengkal* literally designates a unit of length measuring 3.75 meters, remarkable in this context.

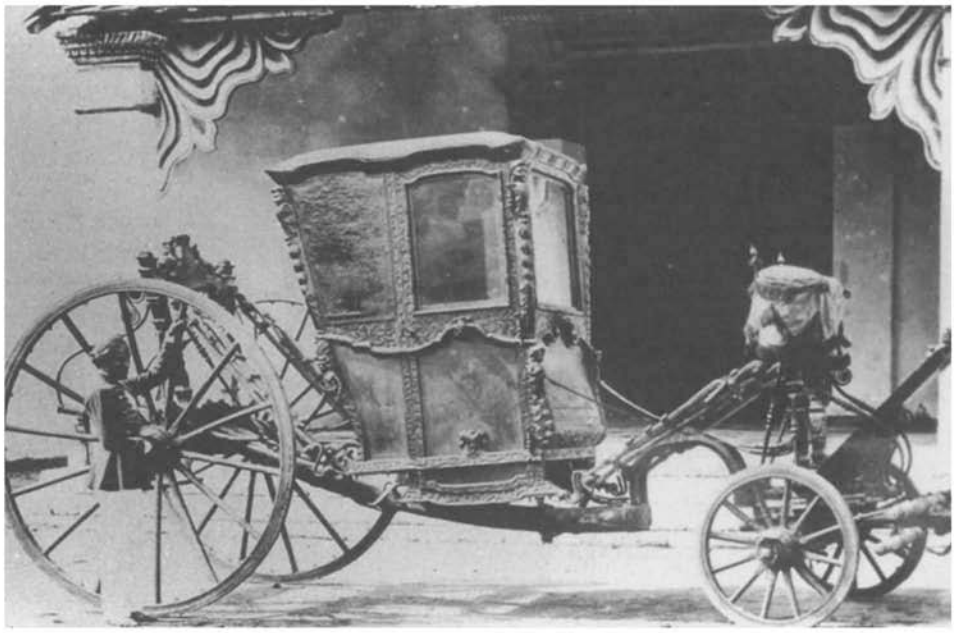


Fig. 1. Kangjeng Kyahi Garudha, the carriage of state that transported Pakubuwana II from Kartasura to found the Kraton Surakarta in 1745. Courtesy the Mangkunagaran Palace.

when Pakubuwana II ceremoniously emerged from his ravaged kingdom, ready to join the procession:

> Upon the appearance of the King,
> the Company and the Javanese troops
> saluted with a loud salvo
> and were answered by the great cannon's
> shattering thunder;
> the trumpets, the guns, the music,
> . . .
> the carabalèn gamelan played beautifully,
> and there was tumult among all the people of the capital.
>
> The voices of men could be heard,
> joined by the striking of all sorts of instruments,
> the firing of guns and the great cannon,
> the neighing of mighty horses,
> as if the world had broken into three.

Now will be told the story
of the manner in which
the Ruler departed.[6]

In high contrast to such tumultuous echoes of royal wars past, the procession itself was constituted in a formal, stately order detailed in the stanzas that immediately follow, stanzas that ritually reinscribe the slow passage of Sir Venerable Eagle and Company, stanzas that elaborate on "the manner in which the Ruler departed."

The manner of the king's exit from Kartasura was an old-fashioned progress: a royal procession marking an auspicious time when the king went forth with regalia to tour. The eighteenth-century grand procession to Surakarta in many respects resembled the royal progresses of the fourteenth-century Indic Javanese court of Majapahit recorded in *Nagara-Kertagama,* a sort of "metaphysical road show," as Clifford Geertz dubbed the Majapahit tour, in which "the very order of the march conveyed the structure of the cosmos—mirrored in the organization of the court—to the countryside."[7] Like most Javanese royal progresses past, the procession to Solo meant to display a kingdom in its well-ordered glory, a stately parading of ceremonial parasols, powerful pusaka heirlooms, and empowered personnel. At any point along the route of this royal progress, it would seem as if the state, or better yet, the kingdom itself—perhaps even the cosmos—embodied in the Pakubuwana and variously manifested in all that surrounded him, slowly passed by in ideal ritual process.

The much celebrated progress of February 20, 1745, was, however, significantly unlike Javanese royal progresses performed either before or after that fateful day. At the head of the procession were the twin banyan trees—*the* living signs, in all their massive tangles of air-roots, of a Javanese king's encompassing authority—uprooted from their sacred plots on the old Kartasura palace grounds and carted off like potted plants en

[6] Soepomo Poedjosoedarmo and M. C. Ricklefs, "The Establishment of Surakarta, A Translation from the *Babad Gianti,*" *Indonesia* 4 (1967): 102. I have somewhat modified this and subsequent passages from this translation of the *Babad Giyanti.* Giyanti (a variant transliteration yields Gianti) is a proper name referring to the place where the 1755 treaty formalizing the partitioning of the Central Javanese royal realm was signed.

[7] Clifford Geertz, "Centers, Kings, and Charisma: Reflections on the Symbolics of Power," in *Local Knowledge* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), p. 133. Geertz adds that of 1,330 lines in *Nagara-Kertagama,* "no less than 570 are specifically devoted to descriptions of royal progresses, and the bulk of the rest are ancillary to those" (p. 130). See Th. Pigeaud, *Java in the 14th Century: A Study in Cultural History,* vol. 3 (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1963), for a translation of the *Nagara-Kertagama* into English.

route to transplantation. Following the ambulatory banyan trees was an equally unlikely sight, the Gilded Throne-room pavilion (Bangsal Pangrawit) in which the Pakubuwana sits in state, transported mobile-home-like in its royal entirety. This was a progress taken literally; a king was truly on the move as an entire kingdom, or at least what was left of it, passed by in peculiar actuality.

In the introduction to their translation of passages in "The Giyanti History" that describe the move to Solo, Soepomo Poedjosoedarmo and M. C. Ricklefs note that this chronicle "preserves not only a plausible version of the 'inside' events leading to the establishment of Surakarta, but also records the Javanese attitudes and interests involved in such affairs of state, as well as containing some marvelous passages of great intrinsic literary value."[8] But what exactly was such an affair of state? The move from Kartasura, a move in which the remnants of a sacked palace were simply picked up and ceremonially conveyed, with Dutch escort, a short dozen kilometers down the road, was quite novel in Javanese history.[9] Even the royal refugees from the classical kingdom of Majapahit did not attempt such a move when their palace fell in 1478. Instead, the remaining members of the famed Majapahit dynasty headed for the mountains of Central Java and the hills along Java's south coast, where, as legends tell, they either died or magically disappeared (*moksa*) as Majapahit's last king, Brawijaya V, is said to have done on Mt. Lawu's summit, leaving behind a ghostly trail of spiritual energy that would be retraced by future generations of Javanese in search of power.

It was the special fate of Pakubuwana II, however, the very "Axis of the Cosmos," not to vanish mysteriously yet conventionally by custom to the otherworldly periphery of political power but to be transferred to a new position, a new department in the changing political cosmos of eighteenth-century Java. With Company assistance, His Majesty would be relocated in a cosmic center just a cannon's echo away from his fallen palace. Despite all ceremonial appearances—or more to the point, precisely *because* of them—the grand procession represented no ordinary state of affairs.

[8] Poedjosoedarmo and Ricklefs, "Establishment of Surakarta," p. 89.

[9] The three most immediate possible historical precedents for the 1745 move display scenes quite different from this royal progress to Solo. The several relocations of the Mataram palace in the early seventeenth century (from Kuta Gede to Karta c. 1614–22 and from Karta to Plered in 1647) were signs of an undefeated, expanding kingdom. Amangkurat II's (r. 1677–1703) founding of Kartasura in 1680 was, like the founding of Surakarta sixty-five years later, very much based on Company aid but not performed as a royal progress.

Such a move had a marvelous effect. The chronicle continues:

> Upon the arrival of
> His Highness at Solo,
> the Gilded Throne-room was set up
> . . .
> the troops sat in order, attending.
>
> The King sat in the Throne-room
> with the officers and the Commandant
> standing on the right side
> of the Royal Sitting-hall;
> the soldiers were in long rows,
> Dutch and Javanese,
> all on the alun-alun;
> the King announced softly
> that the village of Solo was renamed, the Capital,
> Surakarta Hadiningrat.
>
> The religious officials
> then prayed for the well-being of the kingdom;
> His Highness ordered
> the planting of the fenced banyan.
> . . .
> Now His Highness the King indeed
> took up residence in the city of Surakarta;
> there was no misfortune,
> everything was in good order [*satata amamangun*].[10]

The procession from Kartasura completed, Pakubuwana II pronounced Surakarta the capital while religious officials transplanted the regal banyan trees and sounds of gamelan orchestras mixed with Company music and artillery salutes, all with Commandant Hohendorff and cohorts as witnesses. Everything, then, was in "good order." The 1745 ritual procession itself—a procession that, given its celebrated length and relatively short route, could very well have arrived at its destination while still leaving its point of departure—apparently brought a sudden new order to things.

The formal procession from Kartasura represented a significant shift in

[10] Poedjosoedarmo and Ricklefs, "Establishment of Surakarta," pp. 105–8.

what now probably would be called political strategy. Never before had a Javanese king as thoroughly defeated as Pakubuwana II picked up palace pieces—throne-room, banyan trees, and all—and moved, with such ceremony, right next door. For when the remnants of the kingdom actually passed by on their move to Solo, they did so *as if* in royal progress. Forming a grand procession of state at the very moment in a kingdom's demise when convention advised formal retreat, the Pakubuwanan house performed a most original ritual act: in the customary guise of a royal progress, and with Company escort, it ceremoniously founded a new kingdom.

One of the many unintended consequences of this act through which the Kraton Surakarta was created—consequences that included the eventual transfer to the Dutch of most powers of state, save the significant symbolic shell of what later would come to be thought of as "traditional" Javanese authority—was the appearance of ritual as a supplementary sign of displacement. The procession to Solo represented both a displaced kingdom *and* a denial or deferral of that displacement, that is, an epistemological displacement in which the classic difference between royal progress (when a king is displayed as the reigning icon of kingship in a flourishing kingdom) and royal retreat (when a defeated king abandons kingship for the peripheral powers of refuge) was by-passed. Pre-Surakarta royal processions no doubt always had self-consciously attempted, with varying degrees of success, to live up to and surpass the splendor of those of legendary kings. The procession from Kartasura, however, now recalled the royal progress to perform as a sign of what the 1745 procession was *not:* namely, the manifest image of a flourishing, already well-ordered kingdom. Ritual thus emerged as a new form of power, a particularly privileged process for transforming the contradiction between what was and what was not into a novel royal state. Upon this transformed contradiction, the Kingdom of Surakarta, "Finest in the World," was founded.

On the questions of protocol that may have faced Pakubuwana II just before the 1745 move, "The Giyanti History" reports briefly:

> [The ministers] Pringgalaja
> and Sinduredja quickly came
> before the ruler,
> reporting the completion of the construction
> of the future palace;
> then the King
> immediately ordered the preparations,

> fulfilling the customary requirements [*anetepi adat*] when a ruler moves his capital.
>
> All the necessities being ready,
> the King and Queen
> and all the princesses
> dressed themselves in splendid garments
> set with precious jewels,
> sparkling like a pond,
> radiant and glittering,
> wonderful was the sight.[11]

Precisely what might have been recalled as a source for ritual precedent "when a ruler moves his capital," is circumvented by the phrase "fulfilling customary requirements." The king and his family "dressed themselves in splendid garments" and that, along with a profusion of offerings, apparently was that.

Later retellings of the historic procession, however, would more than fill the black hole in customary practice presented by the move to Solo. A Kraton Surakarta chronicle inscribed in the early twentieth century, for example, introduces its extensive prose description of the move with a scene in which Kartasura court officials cite the legendary precedents and ritual requirements for migrant royalty in the process of relocating their palaces.[12] Listing the changes and additions to these requirements, mostly a growing menu of offerings, made by four mythic Javanese kings in storybook chronological order, the text imagines the fourth of these kings, one Prabu Banjaransari, decreeing the following:

> The King and his Queen both wear new garments like those worn by a groom and bride for their wedding, and the road is lined with customary decorations. Members of the nobility high and low, the prime minister, the courtiers high and low, all with their spouses dress themselves in the clothing of a groom and bride for the [*sapeken*] ceremony one week following the wedding [when the groom returns with his new bride to his parents' house]. Upon arriving at the new kingdom, a great feast is held, a formal banquet dinner.[13]

[11] Ibid., pp. 99–100.

[12] *Babad Sangkala* (composed Surakarta, n.d.; inscribed Surakarta, c. 1924). Ms. SP 220 Ca-A; SMP KS 1A. I am grateful to Nancy Florida for bringing this manuscript to my attention.

[13] Ibid., p. 44.

Although eighteenth-century chronicles nowhere indicate that Pakubuwana II and his queen (much less, all of the palace officials and their spouses) dressed in imitation of grooms and brides for the 1745 move, it is most significant that by the early twentieth century, such a scene should be envisioned as *the* logical customary response. By the New Order 1980s, "Solo Develops" could report, completely naturally, that "His Majesty the King Sri Pakubuwana II . . . was attired in royal costume resembling the costume of a groom."[14] Through a nineteenth-century conflation of political or state power on the one hand and cultural or domestic power on the other, king and groom would become somewhat interchangeable signs and royal weddings the ideal locus of an evolving elite cultural power. The procession to Solo became a celebrated scene of origin not only for the Kraton Surakarta but for all the kinglike grooms and groomlike kings who would ritually follow in Pakubuwana II's legendary steps.

Substitute Kings, Customary Events

With "The Giyanti History" completed, the same team of palace authors devoted their energies to its chronological sequel, a lengthy work that detailed late eighteenth-century encounters and alliances between various royal houses and dynasties of Java and Madura. The work's title, "The History of Ties" (*Babad Prayut,* from *brayut,* to tie together into one, to carry two children in one shawl), made most explicit the text's dominant theme: marriage bonds. Underlying much of the conjugal knotting described in "The History of Ties" was the late eighteenth-century hope of binding together once again the genealogical loose ends of Javanese royalty that had separated since the fall of Kartasura and the founding of Surakarta. Within the dozen years that immediately followed the establishment of the Kraton Surakarta, Pakubuwana II died (1749) and his palace passed on to his son Pakubuwana III (r. 1749–88); Pakubuwana II's younger brother, Pangéran Mangkubumi, rebelled and received (with Company assistance) sovereignty as Sultan Hamengkubuwana I (r. 1749–92) over "half of Central Java" centered in Yogyakarta just sixty-six kilometers southwest of Surakarta, and Pakubuwana II's nephew, Mas Sahid, rebelled and was awarded (again, with Company assistance) status as a semi-independent prince with the title Mangkunagara I (r. 1757–95) and a large estate within the kingdom of Surakarta itself.

[14] *Solo Membangun,* p. 4.

Within an easy ride on horseback was now not only an "Axis of the Cosmos" and an entrenched "Authority of the Cosmos" (Hamengkubuwana) but an up-and-coming "Lap of the Realm" (Mangkunagara) as well. Through Company intervention, the old cosmos had been partitioned into three mini-cosmoi. With the years of major military confrontations newly past, these three kingdoms now devoted themselves, for better or worse, to the tangled intrigue and domesticated politics of marriage diplomacy.

Of the various royal births, deaths, courtships, marriages, and divorces reported in "The History of Ties" for the 1760s (the decade covered by this chronicle), three extended episodes from the Javanese year 1688 (A.D. 1762–63) give a sense of the increasing significance of ceremony in Surakarta palace politics. In each of these three royal attempts to tie things together, the Company's resident Dutch commanding official (the *Opperhoofd,* or "Huprup" as the title sounded in Javanese), a certain Huprup Béman, played a pivotal role.

The first episode from "The History of Ties" concerns, really, an untying rather than a tying in that it explores Pakubuwana III's divorce from his queen, Ratu Kencana, a Madurese princess to whom he was wedded in 1748 while still a crown prince.[15] By 1762, after thirteen years of rule, Pakubuwana III still had no son and heir apparent by this queen. The relationship between the two became critically strained when the queen suspected, correctly, that her husband (now "desperate with longing," as the text phrases it) was looking for a replacement queen and, worse yet, was seeking Huprup Béman's assistance to ship Ratu Kencana back to Madura. When the irate queen confronted her husband in the palace courtyard, Pakubuwana III, cornered, made the apparently obvious choice:

> The King's companions were but three palace servants,
> one small one
> and only two large ones.
> Quickly the east wall was furnished a ladder,

[15] This alliance was most likely Pakubuwana II's response to Cakraningrat for the latter's recent help in throwing rebels out of the Kartasura palace. For the wedding, invitations were sent to those members of the Surakarta royal family who were, by 1748, in revolt. This included Mangkubumi (the future Hamengkubuwana I), who is said to have responded with a wedding gift! Pakubuwana III's Madurese bride was herself the product of a former alliance between Kartasura and Madura; she was the daughter of Cakraningrat and Cakraningrat's queen, Maduretna, sister of Pakubuwana II.

in great hurry the King reached the top,
forgetting his trousers;
the small servant
was ordered to borrow some pants.[16]

The queen meant business, Madurese style, for

meanwhile inside the palace was
the Queen with wrath intense,
dressed as a soldier,

drawn was her dagger
Sir Bojiparang,
and the dagger Sir Urubjingga,
along with the pistol Sir Kancaka Rupakinca,

exceedingly determined, arm cocked on her hip,
hunting the King.[17]

Once over the wall and trousers retrieved, the king once more made the apparently obvious choice and headed for the safest place he knew: the *Loji,* the Company post and Dutch Huprup's fortified residence just across from the palace.

Arriving at the Loji [the King] met with
the Huprup who was amazed to see
the behavior of the King,
jumpy and wild
as if chased by an army.[18]

Huprup Béman was most pleased to come to the Javanese king's rescue and marched straightway to the palace.

Shouting nonstop the Huprup demanded
that the palace door be opened,
there was no answer,
the Queen was on alert,

[16] R. Ng. Yasadipura I, *Babad Prayut* (composed Surakarta, late eighteenth century; inscribed Surakarta, 1854). Ms. RP B32b; SMP MN 212, p. 100 recto.
[17] Ibid., p. 100 verso.
[18] Ibid., p. 102 verso.

the attendants had fled,
only seven remained,
trembling all,
behind her on the left and right.

The Queen stood with the unsheathed
dagger Sir Boji,
Huprup Béman was exceedingly irritated,
the doors were kicked
three times,
the iron brackets giving in,

on the fourth kick, split in four,
part of the door collapsed
and the Huprup entered
together with dragoons
six, their Captain Adjutant
Bonggarèkèn leading the way.[19]

In the end, the Huprup persuades the queen out of the palace, arranges her divorce from a relieved Pakubuwana III, and makes the official preparations for her eventual return to Madura.

Other than a highly condensed description of the formal divorce (*talak*), this story of thwarted revenge expends little scribal energy directly on the subject of ceremony. At the same time, however, it opens up textual space for ceremony in subsequent scenes in "The History of Ties" both by freeing Pakubuwana III from a formidable force that would have obstructed marriage alliance negotiations and, more significantly, by portraying an unruly scene utterly devoid of ceremonial power. Only through the Huprup's military prowess is the disorderly queen disarmed. It is precisely such militant action (recalling as it does the "turmoil" of the past) that comes to feel *almost* sit-comically out of place in "The History of Ties," and gradually becomes transposed, isolated, and framed as the customary battlelike excitement associated with state ceremony.

Within four months after the king's divorce from Ratu Kencana, Prince Mangkunagara I (of the Mankunagaran Palace, Solo's junior palace and rival of the Kraton Surakarta) sought and won for his eldest son the

[19] Ibid., pp. 103 recto–103 verso.

eldest daughter of Pakubuwana III. As the king's first daughter, upon marriage she would receive the title Little Queen (Ratu Alit), claim to a substantial body of land just west of Solo near the old Kartasura palace,[20] money, and other rights of prestige. All of this was to Mangkunagara I's strategic pleasure. But the real jackpot, or so it seems to have been imagined, was future kingship for Mangkunagara I's son as Pakubuwana III's successor.[21] Coverage of this moment of tying together, the second of three episodic detours here, is particularly suggestive of the emerging late eighteenth-century significance attached to, that is, perceived as, the dramatic power of "Javanese custom."

> On Monday the tenth of [the Javanese month] Jumadilakir
> the King held a celebration.
> Princess Palace Beauty [Ayu Kadhaton] was
> to be married to
> Mangkunagara I's son
> Prince Sura his name.
> The [Javanese] year was Bé.
> Prince Mangkunagara
> was exceedingly earnest in his part of the celebration,
> becoming in-laws with the King.[22]

Anticipating the wedding, gamelan orchestras sounded for seven nights and seven days at the palaces of both the Pakubuwana and the Mangkunagara. During this week, palace-aligned rural rulers arrived from their territories for nightly *tayuban:* raucous dance parties featuring liquor, alluring female dancers, and a celebrated status sequence for those males who, one by one, join the dancers. The extensiveness of the wedding celebration and that celebration's inscription would reflect the ruling elite's "earnestness."

[20] Land awarded with a princess is called *bumi panandon;* its ownership is temporarily transferred along with certain stipulations. For the approximately seven thousand square meters of land that accompanied Pakubuwana III's daughter, part of the proceeds from its use were to be returned as tax paid by the Mangkunagaran to the Kraton Surakarta.

[21] Although the king already had sons from concubines, he had none from a queen and had no acknowledged crown prince. As is true of most Javanese royal marriages, this alliance violated the customary rules of kinship. Here, children of first cousins (Mangkunagara I and Pakubuwana III share a patrilateral grandfather in Amangkurat Jawi IV) are married in violation of the *misanan* rule.

[22] Yasadipura I, *Babad Prayut,* p. 123 verso. Jumadilakir is the sixth Javanese month. "In-laws" (*bésan*) specifically refers to the kin relationship formed between the groom's parents and bride's parents.

On the wedding day proper, the groom set out on horseback in grand procession from the Mangkunagaran to meet formally (*panggih*) his princess bride at the Kraton Surakarta across town. The streets roared with parading soldiers, loud ceremonial gamelan, rifle salvos, and, most of all, spectators.

> There was no one left behind at home,
> all of the subjects in the kingdom
> crowded into the streets
> jammed and pressed together,
> except for those who were lame
> or blind;
> only they did not watch.[23]

Such crowds of subjects press all attention, including the reader's, into concentrated focus on the streets, the privileged site for action depicted in this episode of "The History of Ties." For it is the crowds of spectators pressing forward to watch that transform procession into spectacle—indeed, a spectacle of such intense attraction that only the lame and blind did not watch.

Amidst the text's parade-length description of detachments of royal troops—the "Black Arrows of Fire," "Red Arrows of Fire," "Victorious Bodies," and "Itchy Ants"—the groom suddenly appears and the authors turn at once to simile:

> The groom was like Abimanyu dressed up
> when he was made a substitute
> to take over in the interim
> as an emergency military commander [*sénapati*]
> and ordered with the duty to confront
> the Cakra battle formation
> of Astina's Kurawa king.[24]

Drawing on the Javanese-Indic epic the "Bharatayuda,"[25] the authors liken the groom (parading in ceremonial dress and on horseback) to Abimanyu at the very moment that this mythic hero acted as emergency

[23] Ibid., p. 124 verso.

[24] Ibid., p. 125 recto.

[25] The "Bharatayuda" is the story of the apocalyptic Great War between the Pandawas and Kurawas within the epic "Mahabharata."

military commander (*sénapati dadakan*) and single-handedly faced his enemy's deadly battle formation—a formation of encompassment that would, as it turned out, shower him with fatal arrows. That this sad image of young Abimanyu—a Bharatayudan image still upsetting, in the context of wayang shadow-puppet theater, to contemporary Javanese—should apply to an aspiring groom is striking and, no doubt, drawn from the heroic past for its highly dramatic effect. The link with the past is based, however, on a singular coincidence: like Abimanyu himself, the groom appears as a *substitute* military commander. Through a logic of coincidental substitution, mythic Bharatayudan action is written into the late eighteenth-century Surakarta wedding procession.

The same stanza continues:

> Now then, the head of the procession
> having reached the Loji
> with all his forces, [the Javanese] Commander
> Jayanagara,
> those behind him crowding forward,
>
> shouted out while still on horseback.
> 'Twas the Huprup who was ordered out,
> the startled Huprup
> came out in a rush.
> Jayanagara straightway said,
> "Huprup, fast,
> fire the cannons at once!"
>
> The Huprup replied, "Hey, Jayanagara,
> the groom is still far off,
> are you drunk?"
> Said Jayangara
> "To the west of the outermost palace gate has come the groom,
> so go ahead and fire at once."
>
> Thus compelled by Commander Jayanagara,
> the Huprup quickly obeyed,
> signaling his gunners,
> thunderously the cannons sounded forth.
> Jayanagara spoke calmly
> "*Now follow this,*
> *let me tell you,*

by Javanese rules [adat Jawa] *a groom is the*
same as a general [jéndral]
so sound cannons galore!"
And so Huprup Béman
just obeyed,
the cannons shot over and over again.
From his great pleasure,
Jayanagara danced,

jumping up and down twirling his moustache.
The Huprup enjoyed the show
and invited Jayanagara to have a seat
before the groom arrived.[26]

No sooner is the parading groom likened to the mythic Bharatayudan military figure Abimanyu, than his status is further elevated to that of a very different figure of power: a *Dutch* general, for the term Jayanagara employs in the above passage is not the Javanese *sénapati* but *jéndral.* The text's description of the wedding procession thus cuts with remarkable ease from Bharatayudan hero to Mangkunagaran groom to Dutch general, all appearing in quick paradelike succession. The chronicle already holds within one continuous field of vision disparate images of power—now divine-mythic, now domestic-cultural, now foreign-military. Moreover, Jayanagara makes this acutely cultural equation between groom and jéndral by appealing to the notion "Javanese rules" (adat Jawa).[27] It is as if Javanese rules somehow not only transcended the rules of respect demanded by Javanese royalty but exceeded even the restrictions on Javanese behavior imposed by Dutch intervention into Surakarta political affairs, for such a sounding of cannons was *normally* reserved for a king or jéndral. All of this was to Jayanagara's great pleasure; it was left to the Dutch Huprup to "enjoy the show" that was becoming "Java." The ceremonial juxtaposition and inscription of these images of power would become all the more familiar in the nineteenth century. The authority of Surakarta kings would be reinscribed along lines just beginning to form in "The History of Ties," lines representing these kings as supreme mani-

[26] Yasadipura I, *Babad Prayut,* pp. 125 recto–125 verso (emphasis added).

[27] I have translated *adat* here as "rules" rather than, for example, "custom(s)" in an attempt to treat such requirements within the specificity of the 1760s context and, thus, resist resorting to the more enframed, quasi-ethnographic appeal of *custom* per se. As will become evident in this and subsequent chapters, *adat* would be converted into a privileged form that might then reappear, retrospectively, as *custom.*

festations of the ideal groom, the reigning icon of Javanese rules and, eventually, Javanese custom itself.

Joined by the Huprup, the groom's entourage proceeded to the Kraton where, after a brief one-stanza rite[28] (in which the bride and groom ceremonially sit in Pakubuwana III's lap), family and guests wept with emotion. Not to be left out, Huprup Béman himself "joined in the weeping" (*anut milu anangis*). Even the skies poured down tears and thundered in salute, and with this heavenly outburst the Bharatayuda simile was brought home. On its return from the Kraton to the Mangkunagaran, the procession

> arrived at the Loji.
> The Dutch ladies had already made the preparations,
> everything arranged,
> the bridal couple arrived,
>
> so thunderously sounded the Loji cannons answering
> together with the soldiers in salvos,
> the beri gong answered,
> mixing with lightning and thunder,
> kodhokngorèk and carabalèn gamelan orchestras,
> all of these sounds together
> did shake and resound.
>
> Perhaps that is how the Bharatayuda War sounded
> when at Abimanyu's death
> the Pandawas ran amok.[29]

The trio of power figures, Bharatayudan-Javanese-Dutch, thus are transposed in a musical noise—now the heavens' thunder, now court gamelan, now Loji cannons—whose combined volume sounds like war, indeed, the greatest of all wars. As noted in the description of the move from Kartasura in "The Giyanti History," it was against a background of such tumult that the order of the procession was constructed and a show of stately orderliness displayed. In "The History of Ties," the show

[28] The point is not that the 1762 wedding rite actually was truncated but that unlike marriage alliance intrigue and royal wedding parades formal wedding rites did not yet receive extensive textual attention.

[29] Yasadipura I, *Babad Prayut,* p. 126 recto.

expands into a full-blown spectacle whose amplified accompaniment—"all of these sounds together did shake and resound"—creates a sort of ceremonial amok in the streets of Surakarta.

In contrast to this spectacular commotion, a more refined scene of order was staged not in the streets but within the walls of the palace proper. From the Loji, the bridal procession finished its ritual route, returning to the residence of the Mangkunagara. Once inside, the bride and groom assumed their places (*palenggahan,* a term indicating both seat and status) at the center of a ceremonial setting already well-ordered (*wus tata-tinata*). It is significant that the text does not *yet* dwell on the interior scene of order surrounding the prince groom and his princess bride who are left, as the episode ends, undescribed, presumably sitting in state behind palace walls.

Like Mangkunagara I, Yogyakarta Sultan Hamengkubuwana I (representing, as noted earlier, the third of eighteenth-century Central Java's three mini-cosmoi) also sought a Kraton Surakarta princess for his son the crown prince and, thus, a tie with Pakubuwana III. After negotiations, the crown prince arrived in Solo on May 21, 1763, with an entourage of no less than three thousand foot soldiers and four thousand cavalry and the requisite Dutch officials, including the Huprup of Yogyakarta who forthwith conveyed a letter from Hamengkubuwana I to Pakubuwana III:

> The Huprup straightway handed over the letter,
> ceremoniously received then examined,
> thunderous sounded the salvo,
> cannons one after another
> joined by sounding of gamelan.[30]

Delivery of a letter to the king was, of course, a ceremonial act of routine, weighty import calling for salvos and toasts; indeed, such acts often were the sole rationale for palace celebrations. The letter from Hamengkubuwana I (a formal introduction for the crown prince), however, contained a particularly pertinent message.

> "My child King, your younger brother here,
> a *santri* is he,
> should you my regnal son hold a party,

[30] Ibid., p. 159 verso.

your younger brother has never before drunk liquor
and never before danced,

he's just read the Kor'an and holy books
since he was a boy, and knows nothing of rice wine."[31]

Apparently assuming that Hamengkubuwana I intended for him to educate the naive prince in manly ways and entertainment, Pakubuwana III provided the prince a lavish tayuban party with gamelan, liquor, and four exquisite erotic dancers who, the chronicle discloses, moved "as if they could fly." The king, saluted by cannons that "roared like thunder," was the first to join the dancers; in accordance with palace etiquette, His Majesty was immediately followed by the Dutch Huprup. But when the king then commanded the Yogyakarta prince to follow suit:

The Crown Prince of Yogyakarta
replied, "Thank you, but I have never been involved
in that kind of business,

on my life I say this, elder brother King."
His Majesty approached where he sat
standing directly before the chair
of his younger brother who fell at once to his knees
and cowered before his elder brother the king.[32]

As Pakubuwana III's fatherly efforts to get the prince out on the dance floor failed, an angry and drunken Huprup Béman stepped in on the king's behalf. Forcing a brimming glass of rice wine on the poor prince, the Huprup reckoned:

"Your father the Sultan of Yogyakarta
who's already old and of religion devout
is not stubborn like you.
He'd go along for a drink or two,

[31] Ibid., p. 160 recto. "My child, King" (*anakku Prabu*) indicates the generational difference between Hamengkubuwana I and his patrilateral nephew, Pakubuwana III. Similarly, "younger brother" refers to the prince's status as Pakubuwana III's genealogically "younger" first-cousin. A *santri* is someone schooled in Islam; the sense of this passage is not that the prince is a religious fanatic but simply that he was raised as a santri.

[32] Ibid., p. 160 verso.

because he knew what's correct,
the Company set him up as Sultan.
You are his son
but you don't follow his example.
You'll be an insolent and arrogant one,
ignorant of what's correct,
you'll toss out what's right."[33]

When the Yogyakarta courtier Urawan intervened politely on the prince's behalf, the irate Huprup flew out of control.[34] Smashing his glass to the floor, Béman roared, in coarse Malay:

"Hey Rawan, you animal,
did you train this Crown Prince?
Your prince is a little shit,
. . .
and Rawan is a dog!"[35]

Prince Mangkunagara suddenly leapt into a dramatic solo dance as diversionary relief entertainment but without much success for even Pakubuwana III (now kindly consoling the sobbing Yogyakarta prince) did not escape the Huprup's words:

"What a slow-moving king, the sire
is a real Company king,
nothing rough allowed."[36]

With this, the Huprup made a spirited exit, leaving Pakubuwana III so enraged that his very "soul was on fire." But what was His Majesty to do?

[33] Ibid., p. 161 recto. My translation of lines four through six is deliberately ambiguous. The structure of Javanese verse allows the possibility that because Hamengkubuwana I "knew what's correct," either he would have a drink or two or the Company set him up as sultan or both.

[34] *Babad Prayut* notes that the Yogyanese Huprup—the most likely candidate for confronting Béman—was sprawled on the adjacent drinking room's floor unconscious.

[35] Yasadipura I, *Babad Prayut,* pp. 161 recto–161 verso. The text reads: "Heh Rawan sira binatang / apa sira ajar Pangran Dipati / tahiyoli bendaramu . . . Rawan sudah jadhi anjing."

[36] Ibid., p. 162 recto.

The King immediately gave orders to
No Return [Tan Kondur, the palace executioner]: "In the royal jail
where there is a prisoner,
kill this man."
Immediately did No Return exit,
arriving at the outermost palace main gate,
and a prisoner was straightway stabbed.[37]

With the episode's conclusion, Prince Mangkunagara approached the king with the following philosophic words:

"It is nothing to worry about if you consider,
[the Huprup is] just a little different,
a crazy Dutchman [*Walanda baring*] to be sure.

Why, his anger's all over the place,
irascible, doesn't make sense."[38]

The 1760s world of "The History of Ties" is a world of peculiar confrontation, of action—particularly military action—turned back on itself and domesticated. Although armed with an entourage of seven thousand, the insulted Crown Prince of Yogyakarta has no choice but to head for home in a huff. Similarly, although verbally assaulted by a drunken Dutch Huprup, Pakubuwana III finds revenge in the palace jail "where there is a prisoner," a *Javanese* prisoner. It is a world in which thunderous cannonfire indicates, in all probability, that an official letter has just been opened, a groom is on his way, or a king is on the dance floor as the sounds of war become bracketed, noisy accompaniment for the "action" of ceremonial events. It is a world where cannon noise interpreted, literarily, as "a sign that the citadel is breached," means that a royal marriage has just been consummated.[39] The world thus is con-

[37] Ibid., p. 162 verso.

[38] Ibid., p. 163 recto. The next day, Mangkunagara sent his wife, Hamengkubuwana I's daughter, whom he had married during the Giyanti years, to patch up relations with her younger brother the crown prince on the return trip to Yogya. Even the sobered Béman moved toward reconciliation by sending along generous quantities of supplies, most notably bread, butter, and coffee. But Hamengkubuwana I remained furious and not only abandoned his plans for a marriage alliance with Pakubuwana III but prevented his daughter from ever returning to Mangkunagara I.

[39] In her analysis of *Babad Nitik*, a diarylike contemporaneous chronicle covering the decade 1781–91 and written in the court of Mangkunagara I, Ann Kumar notes that the

structed of substitutions: of grooms for generals (and Dutch jéndral for Javanese sénapati), of ceremonial "amok" for war, of cannon salutes for cannonfire, all exaggerated echoes of a not-so-distant embattled past. Indeed, the theoretical thread that binds together much of this text is the assumption that access to power in the 1760s involved a particular strategy of alliance, providing Pakubuwana III with a *substitute* son.

Such a logic of substitution anticipated a series of ritual substitutions and displacements through which a genealogy of kingship and aura of authority would be reproduced in the Kraton Surakarta throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. As suggested earlier, the particular power of ritual substitution in Surakarta may be traced to 1745 and the celebrated process that substituted a ritual "progress" for retreat, thereby transforming a contradiction into a kingdom. "The History of Ties" was one of the first in a series of Surakarta palace texts inscribed across this contradiction. The grand ceremonials of court life, present yet significantly undeveloped and peripheral in earlier Central Javanese court accounts, became heightened objects of authorial desire and textual focus. Such events—ceremonies for official letters, elaborate wedding processions, rounds of handshakes, and toasts of respect—were highlighted, in turn, because they were just the sorts of event happening in the 1760s palace. Within this royally domesticated context, "Javanese rules" began to assume a new, late eighteenth-century reality persuasive enough to, say, "sound cannons galore" *as if* for a general, most especially for a native groom.

On the Origins of Order

The Company-orchestrated partition of Java achieved permanence through formal laws that regularized and governed the boundaries of the

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cannon salute "which seems to have been standard ceremonial to mark the consummation of royal marriages . . . is described as *pratondha bedhah kutha,* 'sign that the citadel is breached'" ("Javanese Court Society and Politics in the Late Eighteenth Century: The Record of a Lady Soldier. Part I: The Religious, Social, and Economic Life of the Court," *Indonesia* 29 [1980]: 37 n. 211). Kumar adds: "It is already more than twenty-six years since Mangkun[a]gara laid down his weapons when the diary begins, yet we find in it strong echoes of those mid-century years of war. . . . We see this in the descriptions of the great ritual celebrations of its [the court's] unity: the tournaments where the Mangkun[a]garan soldiery competed in horsemanship and other military arts, and the theatrical and dance performances which now, three decades later, still reenacted in dramatic form the victories of past battles" (p. 12).

realms of the three Central Javanese kingdoms (Vorstenlanden, "Principalities" as they came to be called in Dutch), laws agreed upon by the Surakarta, Mangkunagaran, and Yogyakarta rulers themselves. "By the 1770s," M. C. Ricklefs notes, "the system [of partition] was so regularised, and so many dignitaries were committed to it for their own benefit, that it was never to be overturned."[40] Within each of the kingdoms, this process of territorial regulation was accompanied by a proliferation of internal court regulations that multiplied methodically from the late eighteenth century on—regulations concerning codes of dress, standards of status, and rules of conduct.[41] In the Kraton Surakarta, batik motifs, designated keris styles, and clothing fashions were defined in detail as the palace bestowed privileges of attire upon an increasingly refined, uniform gradation of courtiers. Rules for palanquin, ceremonial parasol, and carriage usage graphically measured a courtier's rank and social status. If a palace official of said rank did not close his parasol or descend from his carriage at exactly said distance from the palace gate, he would be punished in terms precisely proportionate to his offense to the king. The late eighteenth-century lists of palace ordinances began to read like so many possible status traffic violations.

A century later, the great mass of updated and outdated palace laws listing privileges and prohibitions of courtiers' conduct would be bound together into late nineteenth-century tomes inscribing the history of Surakarta codes of conduct and rules of cultural order. In one such compendium, entitled simply "The Book of Nobility" (*Serat Adhel*), appears a retrospective introduction to the story and motives behind these codes:

> [In the court of Kartasura] regulations governing proper conduct broke down. They did not use the regulations which once were active; little by little, officials made up the rules. Gradually, these became the norm. Decreased was the respect from the commoners who no longer observed the code of servitude [*tataning kawula*]. The common folk acted excessively, without common sense. Those of intellect were defeated. The rebels got worse. . . . At that time, the proper rules of the realm broke down. Commoners wore whatever they pleased. As long as you could afford it, your wish was fulfilled.[42]

[40] Ricklefs, *History of Modern Indonesia*, p. 98.

[41] See, for example, *Undhang-undhang Awisan-dalem I. S. K. S. Pakubuwana IV* (composed Surakarta, 1790) in *Serat Adhel* (inscribed Surakarta, 1893–1939). Ms. SP 177 Ha; SMP KS 201, pp. 35–43.

[42] *Serat Adhel* (composed Kartasura and Surakarta, seventeenth to nineteenth century; inscribed Surakarta, 1893–1939). Ms. SP 177 Ha; SMP KS 201, pp. 100–101. Although the Kraton Surakarta's earliest *inscribed* manuscript of *Serat Adhel* dates from the late

The story continues that Pakubuwana II (like Yogyakarta's newly installed Hamengkubuwana I) decided to return to "the old laws" and apply stiff fines and punishment. It was left to Pakubuwana III and his descendants to cultivate the standards of conduct, refine the rules, tighten the controls, and then reap the benefits: "the nobles were in awe, the servants servile ["the subjects subjected," *para kawula kumawula*], the peasants in awe of natural disasters, the outer territories obedient, and the outlaws without power. *Thus were the origins of an orderly, tranquil* [tata tentrem] *kingdom, from the wisdom that became the pillars of the realm.*"[43]

How different this description is from the ideal Javanese kingdom of oral history and lore, particularly that portrayed in the classic opening scene of wayang shadow-puppet theater, a picture of divine order and pastoral tranquility (tata tentrem), all the natural outcome of cosmic beneficence. In the above passage from "The Book of Nobility"—a passage that appears under the heading "Mahasatata" (Great order)—rules of order (tata) are imagined as the necessary *precondition* for a tranquil (tentrem) realm. Thus described is a negatively constituted minicosmos, a new "Great Order" kingdom grounded on fear of natural disasters, outlawed movements, and, most hauntingly of all for everyday Surakartans, blunders of behavior.

Although such an account of the fall of the Kartasura palace and the subsequent origins of the newly tranquil realm no doubt reflected a late nineteenth-century Surakarta perspective—a view formed after Javanese palace culture had achieved its own peculiar perfection—more than a century of palace regulations bound together in "The Book of Nobility" recorded the gradual elaboration of a model order constructed *as* ceremony and decreed in the name of the king. The realm would be set in perpetual ceremonial motion. The wedding ceremony would constitute that realm's feature act.

By 1783, one generation after the 1760s period of "tying things together," the Crown Prince of Surakarta (b. 1768, *son* of Pakubuwana III)[44]

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nineteenth century, many of the manuscript's entries were copied from earlier documents (of which some still survive) and faithfully record codes of conduct of the early Surakarta decades. The section quoted here, however, is composed in polite High Javanese (rather than the kingly Low Javanese command language of most entries) and probably was written late in the nineteenth century. *Serat Adhel* matter-of-factly derives its title from the Dutch *adel.*

[43] *Serat Adhel,* p. 103 (emphasis added).

[44] This heir was produced by Ratu Beruk, a queen whose status as a commoner would become legendary in palace circles.

wed a daughter of the Madurese Cakradiningrat dynasty. With the various Javanese kingdoms more firmly established—or, at least, relatively accustomed to their miniaturized status—royal marriage diplomacy lost its truly ambitious aspirations and became a limited politics of dynastic alliance. Palace texts, in turn, devoted more attention to how a Javanese royal wedding was customarily performed, that is, to the minute specifics of ritual detail.[45] Although 1780s descriptions of the Surakarta crown prince's wedding were still relatively modest by the literary standards that would guide nineteenth-century accounts of royal weddings, they nevertheless foreshadowed later developments. Thus, for example, the late eighteenth-century chronicle "An Interpretive History from the Mangkunagaran" (*Babad Nitik Mangkunagaran*) noted the public ceremonial processions tied to the 1783 wedding but focused much of its descriptive energy on ceremonies and events *within* the palace. Of increased textual significance was an interior space of ritual order behind palace walls.[46]

The reader of this chronicle is invited to envision a chorus of five hundred Kor'anic reciters performing throughout the night on the eve of the wedding, inside the palace; the emergence of the groom on the wedding day for rites performed by Islamic officials, within the palace's central pavilion; the bridal couple wedded in a series of rites (panggih), in the same pavilion, before being led (along with the reader) by Pakubuwana III through the palace to the crown prince's quarters in the eastern wing of the palace, "thoroughly decorated . . . transformed into heaven," where the couple sit in state and the groom is, as the chronicle inscribes in the most exalted terms, *ginusti-gusti, tur ingaji-aji, pan rinatu-ratu* (treated like a king). The reader's eyes then follow Pakubuwana III surrounded by his entourage as he returns to the palace's central pavilion

[45] The palaces did not, of course, abandon their concern for who married whom and begat what. Indeed, parallel with the emerging significance of ritual was an obsession with intricate strings of strategic alliances and the resultant equally intricate genealogies of royal offspring. These prolific genealogies reveal, perhaps, the most active means by which Surakarta royalty tried to produce power.

[46] For a discussion of *Babad Nitik*, see Ann Kumar, "Javanese Court Society. Part I," and idem, "Javanese Court Society and Politics in the Late Eighteenth Century: The Record of a Lady Soldier. Part II: Political Developments: The Courts and the Company, 1784–1791," *Indonesia* 30 (1980): 67–111. *Babad Nitik* by no means deals solely with orderly ceremonial scenes. As Kumar observes, the "diarist displays a particular interest in misadventures, whether major or minor" ("Javanese Court Society. Part I," p. 8). This recurrent interest in misadventures (very evident in later in-house court chronicles) probably represents the chronicler's attempt to work around the increasing regularity and tedium of post-Giyanti everyday court life.

where *he too* will sit in state, in much the same manner as the groom, as a "Javanese king."

> Then exiting west the King
> returned within the palace
> arriving at the pavilion with places arranged [*tata lenggahé*],
> on chairs [*munggèng kursi*] with all the Dutch
> and the Prince Mangkunagara I
> lined up in a row with the King.[47]

Such interior scenes of stately order where the king, privileged courtiers, and Dutch guests take their designated places in chairs lined up in a row inside the central pavilion, were just the sort that authors of "The Giyanti History" had inscribed concerning the founding of Surakarta when, marvelously, "everything was in good order." Key to the formulation of this logic of orderliness was *tata,* a term expressing actual deployment (of, for example, court officials or palace dancers in choreographic positions) or theoretical arrangement (of the realm by means of court regulations, or, later, of speech by means of "grammar," *tatabasa*) or both as was inherently true of palace life in which everything and everyone, from top to bottom, had a prescribed and visible place in the royal order of things.

In two centuries of Kraton Surakarta texts, nothing was *tata*-ed more frequently than *kursi:* European-style, straightback chairs. For the potential power of chairs in matters of ceremonial place was that they were always set out beforehand in a predesignated and precisely measured formation so that provocative issues of status might be taken care of before the ritual fact. Royalty and select guests were seated in rows of kursi arranged (*tinata*) in studious accordance with a refined system of seating (*tatanan*). And there they sat as if modeling for a portrait in which heads of state sit and present themselves for formal viewing. Thus, "the origins of an orderly, tranquil kingdom" became peculiarly embodied in chairs, everyday "pillars of the realm," in many respects, the real foundation upon which the realm ritually rested.[48]

[47] *Babad Nitik Mangkunagaran wiwit taun Alip 1707 ngantos dumugi Jé 1718* (composed Surakarta, 1791; inscribed Surakarta, 1930). RP B29 (typed transliteration of Koninklijk Instituut Ms. KITLV Or. 231), p. 42 (Ms. p. 22a).

[48] Although the central concern here is chairs arranged in formation for royal audience scenes, it should be noted that very early on the palace held extensive sit-down dinners. An English visitor to Pakubuwana VI's court recorded the following in his account of an 1828 palace wedding: "About midnight we sat down to supper, at a table forming 3 sides of a

Making the Dutch Respectable

It is highly significant that the special attention given to the external appearance of order in Surakarta, so ideally manifest in upright chairs, was initiated by the Javanese ruling elite and only subsequently adopted by Dutch Company officials. Discussing the 1790s social universe reflected in the Mangkunagaran's "An Interpretive History," Ann Kumar comments:

> The [Javanese] aristocracy was extremely conscious of the need to maintain the external signs of gradations of rank—a typically aristocratic concern which was in this case somewhat unexpectedly reinforced by the attitude of a structurally nonaristocratic institution, the [Company]. Perhaps because, once having committed itself to the maintenance of a certain constellation of Javanese princes, it saw the utility of allowing each star to shine with the appropriate luster, the company was punctilious in observing protocol.[49]

With Pakubuwana III, the Company men—scarcely the crème de la crème of Dutch society—became irreversibly involved in court ceremony, issues of etiquette, and refined systems of seating that supported a Javanese sense of tata.

Chairs were not the only means imagined by Surakarta rulers to situate the Dutch intruders within a Javanese semblance of order. The description in "An Interpretive History" of the ceremonies surrounding the crown prince's 1783 wedding continues directly from the passage just quoted with a remarkable stanza. In an almost instantaneous switch,

> without delay, entering the inner palace
> and changing his clothes, the King
> dressed in the Dutch fashion [cara Walandi].
> All the royal family dressed Dutch;
> only the prince [Mangkunagara I]
> wore the *kampuh* [ceremonial batik].[50]

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square, in the same hall or pendopo where the dancers had performed, but outside of this space, between the inner and outer rows of pillars, about 120 persons, I think, sat down, of whom nearly equal numbers were natives and Europeans, or their descendants, of all shades and hues" ("Journal of an Excursion to the Native Provinces on Java in the Year 1828, during the War with Dipo Negoro," *Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia* 7 [1853]: 18. The author is identified as "J. D. P.").

[49] Kumar, "Javanese Court Society. Part I," p. 38.

[50] *Babad Nitik,* p. 42 (Ms. KITLV, p. 22a).

The chronicle notes that of all the royal family, only Mangkunagara I wore Javanese attire, an observation made in this Mangkunagaran-based text several times during the Kraton wedding ceremonies, later with the added comment, "only [Mangkunagara I] *remained firm.*" The obvious implication—that by dressing Dutch, Pakubuwana III exhibited his vulnerability to Dutch influence—is complicated by the fact that there was no apparent need for the king to attire himself in this fashion. The occasion was, after all, a Javanese wedding for which he himself was host. Although Pakubuwana III was by no means a "firm" king—a point brought home by his pistol-packing Madurese queen—his choice of costume in this particular context involved more than simple weakness.

While this was not the first time a Javanese king sported Dutch attire, an earlier case—a classic in Javanese historical sources—of a Javanese king attired like the intruders is most suggestive of the newfound significance accompanying Pakubuwana III's costume changes. Amangkurat II (r. 1677–1703), founder of Kartasura, had been so fond of appearing in Dutch naval uniform that he was dubbed the Admiral Sunan (Sunan Amral). Seventeenth-century Java, however, was not yet capable of wholly recognizing a king in this fashion. Not only was Amangkurat II rumored by Javanese courtiers to be a son of Dutch Admiral Cornelis Janszoon Speelman, he was, on one fateful day (chronicles relate), literally unrecognizable to his own brother, Prince Puger.[51] By 1783, Pakubuwana III could turn to Dutch fashion, as Javanese king, together with his entire family, for the queen and princesses followed suit by dressing in "European ladies' fashion" (*cara nyonyah*).

All of this, no doubt, held a certain novelty value for the Javanese, whose ceremonial appearance in cultural drag displayed a special familiarity with Dutch ways. To dress Dutch—a right reserved for the elite and certain palace servants—was, somehow, to share in the strange power that the persistent presence of the Dutch must have represented to Javanese rulers by the late eighteenth century. Pakubuwana III's cross-dressing exhibited a peculiar privilege that even the Dutch did not enjoy; it was unthinkable for a Huprup to make a formal appearance in Javanese royal attire. "Dutch fashion," thus, was appropriated and entered into the Javanese court catalog of ceremonial costume, a catalog now able to place the foreigners in an identifiable style; these folks also "dressed Dutch." As "Dutch," the Huprup and his cohorts were drawn into a ceremonial scene that was, at bottom, thoroughly Javanese. That such an attempt ritually to bracket the presence of the Company should occur in

[51] I am grateful to Nancy Florida for bringing this case to my attention.

the context of a wedding simply underscored the process of domestication implicitly at work.

One need only recall the 1760s Huprup Béman in "The History of Ties"—that rude reminder of a Dutch presence still precariously primitive and unpredictable, not yet cultured in the Javanese terms that would develop to place the intruder in context—to get a sense of just how far the 1780s Huprup in "An Interpretive History" had been pulled into ceremonial line. Perhaps no character in early Surakarta chronicles better exhibited behavior so badly in need of cultural refashioning than Béman. In his figure, Dutch presence was dramatically intrusive: it forced its way into the picture to kick down palace doors and handle an armed queen, to interrupt the military procession escorting a royal groom, to blunder spectacularly in courtship diplomacy. This intimately violent penetration and control of palace life presaged a more extensive, far-reaching foreign intrusion into Java's heartland. And yet, for all the external control he may have appeared to impose, Béman was, as "The History of Ties" would have it, "just a little different, a crazy Dutchman to be sure," not quite in control of himself, completely capable of cussing out a crown prince one moment and weeping at a royal wedding the next.

The combination of gross intrusiveness and emotional unruliness portrayed so perfectly by Huprup Béman provided precisely the sort of figure that elite Javanese culture would confront with an evolving, self-contained Javanism strong enough to seal foreignness out while drawing the "Dutch" in. When, in the account in "Ties" of the 1762 wedding procession, Jayanagara paused to explain to the Huprup that he should sound cannons galore for the groom—"Now follow this, let me tell you, by Javanese rules a groom is the same as a 'jéndral'!"—it was *as if* the rude Dutchman were receiving a lesson in Javanese culture. The 1760s Huprup performed as an uncultured other for whom Javanese culture purportedly was explained but, in fact, against whom (both contrastively and strategically) Javanese culture would be instituted. The 1780s Huprup was, for ceremonial purposes at least, better behaved. For him, sitting in state alongside his Javanese "king" had become completely routine. This Huprup's ritual incorporation into Javanese affairs of state owed, in part, to Pakubuwana III's appropriation of "Dutch fashion," an act of cultural transvestitism that gave the Dutch an identifiable and implicitly subordinate place in Javanese court ceremony. Pakubuwana III was, no doubt, Java's first true drag king.

Although such an act may have partially domesticated Dutch foreignness, it necessarily raised questions—echoed in the edged aside in "An Interpretive History" that only Mangkunagara I "remained firm"—

regarding the cultural status of Javanese kings. Was Pakubuwana III somehow turning "Dutch"? Just five years after his 1783 wedding (and upon the death of his father), the Crown Prince groom acceded to the throne as Pakubuwana IV (r. 1788–1820) at the impressionable age of twenty. Provoked by his father's actions and the palace's failure to prevent Dutch intrusion into Javanese affairs, this Pakubuwana *banned* the use of Dutch dress by Javanese.[52] In addition, he authorized new palace ordinances, special provisions co-signed by the Huprup, which governed Dutch behavior. In 1797, for example, the Kraton Surakarta issued a set of regulations that dealt directly with Dutch conduct, focusing on privileges of everyday parading, particularly horseback riding and carriage use in the immediate vicinity of the palace.[53] The Huprup was permitted to ride anywhere, anytime, as long as he was pursuing Company business; the rest of the Dutch officers down to the lowliest dragoons (*dragunder*) received parading privileges in strict measure of their rank. Unless they were accompanying the king in procession, responding to an alarming incident, or on their way to a fire—the 1797 ordinance at times revealed a new sense of practicality in matters of palace protocol—the dragoons were required to dismount in the alun-alun area, the Kraton's frontal square and drill arena. Behind this ceremonial control of Company traffic was the desire to slow things down and regain an appearance of orderliness, which then might be observed as a direct reflection of Pakubuwanan authority.

In the years immediately following the formal dissolution of the Company (1800) and the arrival of H. W. Daendels as governor-general for the newly formed colonial Netherlands Indies, the appearance of orderliness adjusted and tightened, but in ways not entirely to the Kraton Surakarta's advantage. Daendels's rule (1808–11) has often been cited by scholars for its administrative and financial reforms and policy of intense centralization. Writing of the effects on Central Javanese court ceremonial life, Heather Sutherland notes:

> Daendels regarded the *hormat* (customary ways of showing respect) which Residents [the colonial administrative replacements for the old position of Huprup] there were forced to use as a humiliation. High

[52] Kumar cites Pakubuwana IV's reaction to European dress as "an early mode of cultural nationalism—some might say xenophobia—in the face of European encroachment" ("Javanese Court Society. Part II," p. 107). Kumar adds that Pakubuwana IV already held these convictions while still a crown prince.

[53] *Angger-anggeranipun I. S. K. S. Pakubuwana IV* (composed Surakarta, 1797), in *Serat Adhel* (inscribed Surakarta, 1893–1939). Ms. SP 177 Ha; SMP KS 201, pt. 1, pp. 1–3. The Huprup who cosigned the 1797 regulations was Baron Jan van Nieuwkerken, Huprup (and subsequently Resident) of Solo, 1776–1803.

> European officials should not have to bow and scrape, stand bareheaded and offer the Sunan [Pakubuwana] (of Surakarta or Solo) and the Sultan [Hamengkubuwana] (of Yogya) wine and *sirih* (betel) to refresh themselves as if they, the Residents, were courtiers seeking favour rather than agents of a great power. So Daendels renamed the Residents "Ministers" and decreed that they should bear the golden parasol of high rank and that ceremonial expressions of status be re-adjusted accordingly. There were some revolts, but on the whole the aristocracy submitted.[54]

Although Daendels's administrative restructuring brought, of course, profound changes to the Indies, within the Central Javanese courts, particularly the Kraton Surakarta, the terms that made Daendels's much-celebrated changes in hormat regulations *understandable,* although distasteful, were already present in the late eighteenth century. Pakubuwana III had cultivated a ceremonial space that drew the Dutch into a model scene of hierarchical order (tata) and cultural fashion (cara), whereas Pakubuwana IV had attempted to place the Dutch at a ceremonial distance by regulating privileges of dress and conduct. Already within each of these kings's realm of imagination was a single system of status that applied to both Javanese and Dutch behavior. Although the general rules of Javanese political play had been bent almost beyond recognition for some time, within the discreet and enduring terms of status jockeying, Daendels's hormat one-upmanship in many respects beat the Surakarta kings at their own game. All future Pakubuwanas would be obliged to refer to their governors-general with the charged familial term of respect, *éyang:* "Grandfather."

Fashioning "Java"

The two decades following Daendels's reign brought to Java events that directly challenged Dutch authority, first from without during the British takeover of the Indies (1811–16), and then from within during the long Java War (1825–30)—a conflict that cost the Dutch colonial government the lives of eight thousand European and seven thousand non-European troops and the Javanese people at least two hundred thousand lives.[55] It is significant that in spite of numerous conspiratorial

[54] Heather Sutherland, *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite: The Colonial Transformation of the Javanese Priyayi* (Singapore: Heinemann Educational Books, 1979), pp. 7–8.

[55] Ricklefs, *History of Modern Indonesia,* p. 113. See also P. J. F. Louw and E. S. de Klerck, *De Java-oorlog van 1825–30,* 6 vols. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff; Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1894–1909); and Ricklefs, *History of Modern Indonesia,* pp. 111–14.

attempts, the Kraton Surakarta (unlike the rival Kraton Yogyakarta) never came into open conflict with the Dutch. For all the rumors that surrounded the Pakubuwanan palace, the ceremonial semblance of order provided by the now highly refined structure of protocol power had become so firmly entrenched that tata appeared to rule. When, in 1816, the British flag in front of the Surakarta Resident's fortified home was replaced by its returning Dutch counterpart, a Kraton Surakarta chronicler matter-of-factly recorded:

> Now at the grand Loji
> the English flag upon being lowered
> received a twenty-one cannon salute,
> and when Holland had raised its colors,
> the salute was just (more of) the same.[56]

No matter what this particular event may (or may not) have signaled for Surakartans, salutes of respect sounded, as always, "just the same."

In no Surakarta ruler was the extraordinary discrepancy between the unnerving impact of Dutch domination and the everyday calm of palace order more forcibly juxtaposed than in the unfortunate figure of Pakubuwana VI (r. 1823–30). In 1829, already four years into the Java War, Pakubuwana VI sat quietly, listening to the following lament offered on his behalf by a senior palace official:

> "In the old days
> the one enthroned as King
> every year would make the tour,
> traveling around to the kingdom's edges,
> mobilizing the entire realm.
>
> It was as if the King really were moving
> his court, the regalia carried along,
> for as long as a month;
> the women of the court
> who were suitable were brought along too.
> But nowadays, I say,
> ever since

[56] *Babad Sangkala* (composed Surakarta, c. 1831), in [*Klempakan Warni-warni*] (inscribed Surakarta, c. 1831). Ms. SP 6 Ta; SMP KS 1C, pt. 2, p. 111. The last line reads, "kurmaté sami kimawon."

the Company has been in Java,
the one who installs the King does not permit
the tour as in the days of old."[57]

Indeed, by the 1820s, Dutch control of the king's travels had become so tight that Pakubuwana VI apparently needed permission from the Resident just to leave palace grounds except for the most routine ceremonial excursions.

Of such excursions, one in particular stood out both for its regularity and for its sociopolitical implications. This ceremonial tour was not long, for the destination, located only a few nineteenth-century blocks from the palace gates, was the Loji, the modified mansion cum colonial administrative center that housed the Resident assigned to Solo. The same court chronicle that inscribed the lament quoted previously, thus habitually recorded events like the following:

On Saturday the eighth
of [the Javanese month] Jumadilawal as the hour
approached five o'clock in the evening
His Majesty set out in procession [*tedhak*] for the Loji;
at half past six
dressed in Dutch fashion [cara Walandi]

he met [panggih] with Resident Nahuis.[58]

The grand tour of the old days had shrunk to a brief cross-town outing formally to meet (panggih, as Javanese brides and grooms are said to do during nuptial rites) with the Resident, official representative of "the one who installs the King," as the court chronicle put it. This ritual outing, known as the Tedhak Loji (to "ceremoniously depart for the Loji"), would be performed by Pakubuwanas (or palace officials acting on their behalf) throughout the nineteenth century into the twentieth.[59]

In little more than a half-century from 1745 to the first decades of the nineteenth century, there emerged what might be called, in the most literal fashion, ritual process. Against the background of turmoil that

[57] Ibid., p. 205. "The one who installs the King" reads, "kang ngamadeg Aji."

[58] Ibid., pp. 200–201.

[59] Older Solonese today recall the 1930s annual August Tedhak Loji processions (in acknowledgment of Wilhelmina's birthday) as the most public of Pakubuwanan displays; such processions provided the most likely encounter with the royal carriage (or limousine), ceremonial regalia, members of the royal family, and Pakubuwana X himself.

surrounded the fall of the Kartasura palace and at the very moment that conventional wisdom advised a king to vanish to the political periphery, Pakubuwana II formed a procession of state that proceeded along its short course to Solo in the customary guise of a royal progress. Through this act, ritual appeared as an ideal process for transforming what was not meant to be into the Kingdom of Surakarta and a new sense of order. "The History of Ties" years of the 1760s immediately after the founding of Surakarta witnessed the emerging significance of grand ceremonial processions that publicly manifested this sense of order by parading, in orderly fashion, a prescribed sequence of marchers. Yet these very processions, recalling as they did the military sounds of the past and attracting mobs of noisy spectators, displayed their own sort of turmoil. In contrast to such public displays of ceremonial amok, Surakarta texts later in the eighteenth century began to highlight interior palace scenes, still-life portraits of a realm in order—Javanese royalty and Dutch guests seated and observed as they themselves observed the official program of events unfolding around them. In the old royal progresses of pre-Surakarta palaces, the kingdom had ceremoniously strutted by in an ambulatory procession of state. By contrast, the Pakubuwana's kingdom of the late eighteenth century on was more or less stuck in its tracks and was forced to find a ceremonial seat and sit through the immobilizing events of what was becoming Kraton Surakarta ritual process.

This conflation of ceremonial procession (a visible sequencing) and ritual process (a theoretical sequencing) represents more than a convenient, although no doubt related, play on my part on the English *process*. The stock Javanese phrase indicating parade sequence or "order of the march(ers)" (*tata ing lampah-lampahan*) also indicates ceremonial sequence or "program of events."[60] By the late nineteenth century, textual programs (*pranatan lampah-lampah*) detailing the schedule of events for specific palace ceremonies would begin to displace older forms for inscribing court life. The events of ceremonial activities and ritual process would become so utterly predictable that they could be inscribed before they happened.

As the movement of late eighteenth-century Javanese rulers became increasingly limited because of Dutch intervention in palace affairs, the Kraton Surakarta thus transposed its focus, as if inward, toward the self-contained details of state ceremony and etiquette. Behind palace walls, ritual process unfolded as a program of events before a seated, privileged

[60] The pivotal term is *lampah* (High Javanese for *laku*), which as a verb means simply "to walk, to proceed." As *lampahan,* the term becomes "story, historical exploits," whereas *lampah-lampah(an)* produces "program, procedures."

audience. Outside the walls, what remained of the grand tour of the old days was the Tedhak Loji, the image of a procession conveying an immobilized kingdom toward colonial acknowledgment, or at least potentially so. Whether within palace confines or in the light of public attention, this form of programming events, this distinctive ritual processing of royal exploits, created the space for a whole world of figures, discursive and otherwise, that might inhabit Surakarta, including one of the most seminal figures in the production of what would become self-consciously identifiable as "Javanese" culture.

According to the passage quoted concerning Pakubuwana VI's execution of the Tedhak Loji, when the Javanese king performed this rite, he did so dressed in "Dutch fashion." Although the king's choice of costume most likely was made in the spirit of Pakubuwana III, it, perhaps, reflected a certain appropriateness for this tour—a meeting with Dutch officials. On other occasions, however, Pakubuwana VI chose another style of dress that the same chronicle is most careful to point out:

> On Thursday the tenth
> of [the Javanese month] Rejeb in the same year
> His Majesty trained the palace guard
>
> on the southern alun-alun,
> His Highness' attire Javanese fashion [cara Jawi].[61]

In the years that followed Pakubuwana III's appropriation (and Pakubuwana IV's initial rejection) of Dutch dress, a singular optional style of attire became readily identifiable. No longer was the conceptual alternative to Dutch dress expressed only in the limited terms of batik *specifics* as in the 1780s when Mangkunagara I characteristically stood "firm" at the crown prince's wedding and "wore the kampuh." Emerging in contrastive opposition to "Dutch fashion" (cara Walandi) came the immensely significant, generalizable cultural figure cara Jawi: "Javanese fashion" or, better yet, "Javanese style."

This "Javanese"/"Dutch" distinction highlighted by the king's wardrobe options, hangs on *cara,* a term that in everyday usage (both present and past, by most accounts) refers simply to a "way" or "manner" of doing something. One fellow, for example, weeds the garden, snores at night, or greets neighbors one way, another fellow, another. As might be imagined, in spite of its apparent matter-of-factness, *cara* easily bends toward reification as "style" and even more so as "custom." When one

[61] *Babad Sangkala* (SMP KS 1C, pt. 2), p. 202.

village, for example, builds wells, appeases spirits, or makes formal speeches one way and another village, another, depending on context, *cara* may imply, "We happen to do it this way, they that way, and that's that" or "We've got our 'customs,' and they (foolishly) theirs." *Cara*'s tendency toward this sort of reification is tied, of course, to a broader history of epistemological shifts and the emergence of a particular form of reflexivity, conveying a sense of, in a word, "culture." In the context of nineteenth-century Surakarta chronicles, however, the term *cara* conventionally designated—in *combination* with "Dutch" or "Javanese"—*attire*. It is as if, for ceremonial purposes, an entire world of differences between Dutch and Javanese ways were reducible to choice of dress, as if what really stood behind world views were wardrobes. Through a logic of the concrete, the root of Javanese custom, or so it would appear, was costume.[62]

Once it became fixed as a logical alternative to cara Walandi, cara Jawi implied the creation of a substitute world, an imagined option to the state of affairs brought to Java by the Dutch: a self-contained, ideally invulnerable, thoroughly "Javanese" world. During the nineteenth century, the self-contained world implicit in cara Jawi would expand to identify "Javanese" language, cuisine, literature, customs, and so on, down the line demarcating classic cultural difference. The "Javanese" figure, thus, would emerge in contradistinction to what *already* had been discursively construed and inscribed in Surakarta texts as its "Dutch" counterpart. The supplementary "Javanese" figure then would appear to counter the force of the other fashioned as "Dutch" by fashioning itself in a certain priority as if "Javanese culture" had always been self-evident. In short, the supplement would come first.

Assuming such a priority, the lines inscribed by this logic of Javanism appeared impervious enough to facilitate a necessary partial absorption of the other. Pakubuwana VI might dress "Dutch" one day, but "Javanese" the next, no matter; both of these clearly belonged to a singular catalog of style.[63] Built into the cara Jawi / cara Walandi distinction was a remove that treated each cara as if equally weighted. Rather than express the native stance toward outsiders—that looming Other—in ex-

[62] An occasional exception finds *cara Walandi* indicating the Dutch language and *cara Jawi* Javanese language (particularly High Javanese). This is increasingly true of *cara Jawi* from the late nineteenth century on. Refined language, like costume, was displayed with style.

[63] Although the passages from *Babad Sangkala* quoted earlier suggest an appropriateness of attire—Dutch costume for meeting the Resident at the Loji, Javanese for training the troops—other passages from this chronicle reveal that this kind of appropriateness was not, in fact, the rule. Dressed "Dutch," Pakubuwanas might very well, as we have seen, preside at a Kraton wedding.

plicitly (and classically anthropological) we/they terms, Javanism subsumed, as it appropriated, *both* "Jawi" and "Walandi." The long-term effect of this appropriation was a sense of self-assurance strong enough to seal foreignness out while bracketing "Dutch" (and others) in and, at the same time, refined enough to attract and draw the foreigner into a "Javanese" world that was, by definition, impenetrable. Regardless of how many Spanish figurines, French chandeliers, Italian sculptures, or Dutch portraits might be crammed into the Kraton Surakarta, it would all, eventually, be viewed as "authentically [asli] Javanese."

Startled by this thoroughly native appropriation of others' manners and styles, an English visitor to Pakubuwana VI's palace in 1828 made the following entry in his journal:

> The [pavilions] were well lighted with chandeliers, lamps and candles, and a large company was assembled, Europeans and half-caste as well as natives. All the Military and Civil Officers, all the Christian population of Solo had been invited. The Susunan [Pakubuwana VI] was also present in an European dress, the coat being an imitation of the full uniform of a general of the Netherlands army, with epaulettes of *real* gold, very well made and a brilliant star on each breast; he wore a dress sword and military hat with feathers corresponding with the coat, the rest of his dress was plain except the diamond knee and shoe buckles, with white silk stockings, and large clumsy shoes. . . . He opened the ball with the [Dutch] Resident's lady in an English country dance, in which he performed with more activity than grace. . . . After some time, waltzing succeeded, in which also the Emperor performed, first with a very tall gentleman and afterwards with a very little lady, this was a failure. His Highness had sent his billiard table to the party, and during the evening played frequently with some of the Europeans, in pools, as did many of the native nobles. Many of these wore the Dutch military uniform, with Major's or Colonel's epaulettes, some of them were mere boys, the relatives of the Susunan, and it was curious to see them squatting around his chair or running messages for him, *reflecting as I thought no distinction on the dress they wore.*[64]

And the occasion facilitating such a fitting display of gold epaulettes, diamond buckles, silk stockings, and all else potentially foreign to Surakarta style was *not,* as one might have expected, a protocol event imposed by the Dutch colonial regime, but quite the contrary—the thoroughly "Javanese" wedding of a Kraton princess.

[64] "Journal of an Excursion" (1853), p. 17 (emphasis and brackets added).

2

Writing Subjects, Writing Authorities

"Java" in the Nineteenth Century

As the alternative, substitute world implicit in the figure "Javanese style," that is, cara Jawi, assumed a certain reality, an everyday realness, the novel sense of an underlying cultural power gained force and the quotation marks framing "Javanese" slowly began to fade into a kind of invisible permanence. This is not to say that future Javanese would not cite "Java" (quite routinely) as a privileged site of cultural authenticity. On the contrary, they could do so with increasing self-assurance that such a citation had a well-founded referent. If one had to pinpoint the year when this realization, as it were, of Javanese culture assumed a seemingly irreversible course, the social historian's choice undoubtedly would be 1830. This date marked the end of the Java War, the advent of the so-called cultivation system (*cultuurstelsel*) by which the colonial government effectively demanded compulsory export crops in lieu of a newly imposed land rent, and extensive annexation of outer territories held by the Kratons Surakarta and Yogyakarta. The year 1830 also marked the end of Pakubuwana VI's relatively brief reign when the Dutch shipped him to Ambon into permanent exile. This young Surakarta king apparently could no longer repress the royal desire to "travel to the kingdom's edges" (as the senior courtier's lament quoted earlier phrased it) and had secretly visited Java's south coast where he allegedly

rendezvoused with Ratu Kidul, Queen of the South, the powerful spirit goddess of the South Ocean and magical consort of Central Javanese kings. It was this venture that Dutch administrators interpreted as an act of potential conspiracy warranting a one-way ticket to Ambon after just a half-dozen years on the throne. In light of the official restrictions placed on Javanese monarchs' movements by the late 1820s, Pakubuwana VI's clandestine excursion to the south shore—goddess or no goddess—technically made him AWOL. The almost three-decade reign of his successor, Pakubuwana VII, demonstrated a sustained willingness to sit reliably in state for a kingdom now substantially drained of political and economic powers.

Scholars of Javanese history more often than not have invoked 1830 as a moment, indeed *the* moment, when Central Javanese kings were truly domesticated by the Dutch. M. C. Ricklefs, for example, notes: "Many local lords and princes had found themselves on the Dutch side in the [Java] war. After 1830, almost all of the aristocratic elite took this course. . . . The Central Javanese courts, now without most of their territories, became ritual establishments and generally docile clients of the Dutch, although a dislike of their subservient position was often just below the refined surface of court affairs."[1] As understandable as this historiographical interpretation is, by featuring 1830 and the end of the Java War as the moment when Javanese palaces "became ritual establishments," this approach essentially reasserts the logic of Dutch conquest: political defeat on the Java War battlefield domesticates Javanese royalty and reduces them to ritual subjects. Relegating "ritual" to default status, a sort of anthropological booby prize for historic surrender, such an approach overlooks the significance of the very different logic of domestication at work in cara Jawi. For this figure arose *within* palace walls in ceremonial contradistinction to cara Walandi and marked a difference that would draw the Dutch into a world of domestication that was, as suggested in Chapter 1, as thoroughly Javanese as it was "Javanese."[2] Similarly, it was with a redoubled sense of orderliness, of tata, that Surakarta rulers seated and ritually situated Dutch intruders, thereby translating them into guests who might *then* be respected. Although 1830 thus appears to signal newfound success for the Dutch in domesticating Central Javanese rulers, it discloses as well a significant point in

[1] Ricklefs, *History of Modern Indonesia*, p. 113.

[2] One century later, the labyrinthine palace walls themselves would remind Surakartans of an ideally refined cultural world permanently hidden from view and, thus, embody the structure of Javanism.

what was, in many respects, a far more powerful form of domestication, a form fashioned discursively in the figure of "Java" by the Javanese themselves. This was a domestication not imposed from without, but accomplished, almost studiously, from within, an accomplishment so perfectly domestic, in fact, that it is difficult to imagine how it could have been brought about in any other fashion.

Although 1830 ushered in just the colonial conditions under which "Java"—that ideal realm, ritually removed from conquest—might flourish, from 1745 on the Kraton Surakarta was already, in effect, a "ritual establishment," but in a double sense. It was the product of a peculiar ritual process that transformed a contradiction into a kingdom, and, at the same time, it was the site where this process was established *as* ritual. In the wake of such a process, a "Javanese" world became increasingly recognizable, familiar, and inhabitable just as ritual events became desirable subjects for focus in Javanese chronicles. Thus *already* projected onto the emptied shell of (what later would be called) political authority that the Kraton Surakarta had become by 1830 were the new outlines of a cultural authority borne by the figure "Java." With the end of the Java War, for all practical purposes, this "Javanese" authority became fixed in place and would appear as deeply rooted as the royal banyan trees, not quite a century after their transplantation.[3]

It is precisely the force of the figure "Java" that makes it misleading to dismiss Central Javanese palaces from 1830 on simply as ritual establishments, as ornate signs of powerlessness or tokens of docility, no matter how docile their regal inhabitants may have been. Beyond the conventional historiographical point that Dutch rule in Central Java was maintained until the end through a typically colonial alliance with the indigenous aristocracy, the power of endurance exhibited by ritual establishments, whether in the concrete form of the Kraton Surakarta, two hundred plus years, or in discursive form, "Java," is most ominous. Even Kraton flag ceremonies saluting the arrivals and departures of colonizers

[3] The dismissal inherent in the historian's phrase, a "ritual establishment," is the correlative opposite of the anthropologist's celebration of divine kingly action in bygone eras of rule—in Java, those before the 1745 move, most especially the era of Majapahit—as quintessentially "ritual." Such celebration treats ritual as a sign of unified behavior in a seamless past, rather than as a sign of displacement. The notion of ritual establishment simply inverts the terms by treating all action in the court as merely ritual. Both approaches thus endow the term *ritual* with an essentially ahistorical—now divinely effective, now perfectly ineffectual—sense. In Chapter 4, I return to the historical emergence of the construct "ritual" in the Netherlands Indies in the form of the Javanese/Malay term *upacara.*

displayed a certain confidence, a strangely empowering obliviousness cultivated in the name of "Java": "and when Holland had raised its colors, the salute was just (more of) the same."

Borne, like the kingdom it founded, by a contradiction in terms (Was the formal procession of 1745 a classic progress or unique retreat for the royal house?) ritual appeared to set the Kraton Surakarta in permanent ceremonial motion. The more ritual reminded Surakartans of a displaced realm—another, original "Java"—the more often ritual was called upon to recover what might have been lost and the more firmly established "Javanese" authority, Kraton originality, and everyday ritual became. In Surakarta, "Javanese" ritual process, thus, was repeatedly recalled to circumvent the contradictions of its own creation. The implications of this process would extend far beyond the walls of the palace proper, and its origins recalled well into the New Order present.

Within the ceremonial world of nineteenth-century Surakarta, one scene in particular expanded to represent "Java" most ideally: the royal wedding. Countless marriages involving royalty—a growing set of kin ties entangled through polygamy, frequent divorce and remarriage, and prodigious proliferation—maneuvered, through alliance and progeny, for the profits of status. Regardless of the relative success or failure of specific royal marriage alliances, however, the significance attached to the customary event occasioned by these alliances continuously deepened, and the ceremony by which alliances were sealed gradually displaced the import of the alliances themselves. The royal wedding—especially when the ruler himself appeared as groom—provided nineteenth-century Surakarta the dominant scene in which "Javanese" cultural order was reinscribed. Before the 1830s, it apparently was unimaginable that a palace chronicle devote itself entirely to a wedding, for older chronicles characteristically allotted such events only a few stanzas within a broader narrative structure concerned more with the historical intrigue of alliance and rivalry than with ceremony per se. From the 1830s on, however, the "royal wedding" developed into a topic demanding an entire volume, a respectable subject warranting a place all its own on the shelves of palace archives.

As this subject attracted the imaginations of palace scribes, the royal wedding began to write itself onto the figure of "Java"; this figure, in turn, discovered new discursive space in which to move. Texts devoted to four of the most prestigious palace weddings of midnineteenth-century Surakarta—two from the Kraton (in 1835 and 1865) and two from the Mangkunagaran (in 1853 and 1877)—thus are revealing for the various

ways they focused upon and thereby constituted the subject of weddings and for the multiple implications such a focus would have for the future of "Java."

Wedding Subjects 1
Grooming Kings

In 1835, the Kraton Surakarta reaffirmed its ties with Madura by hosting a sumptuous wedding that joined Pakubuwana VII (r. 1830–58) with a daughter of Madura's Cakradiningrat dynasty. Negotiations had been under way for some time, and in 1834, the palace ship Rajamala was sent to fetch the Madurese princess. Most probably in anticipation of this wedding, the Kraton author Radèn Ngabéhi Sindusastra chose as one of the very first shadow puppet dramas (*lakon*) to be rendered in formal literary verse, "The Wedding of Parta" ("Partakrama"): the story of young Arjuna's wedding to Sumbadra, princess of the legendary Indic kingdom Mandura or, as Javanese would interpret it, Madura. The choice of this particular wedding drama, however, involved more than just the Madura connection and disclosed the heightened significance, for Surakartans, of ceremony proper; for in no other play from the shadow puppet theater's vast wedding repertoire does a wedding *ceremony* actually appear. No doubt, this is because the furtive conditions of bride capture or elopement characteristic of all other plays culminating in marriage are at basic odds with ceremonial display. "The Wedding of Parta" was and remains the only shadow puppet drama portraying a fully arranged, legitimate marriage which, by convention, demands ceremony.[4]

The remarkable detail with which Sindusastra's versified "The Wedding of Parta" (*Partakrama*) celebrates the mythic wedding of Arjuna and Sumbadra, however, far exceeds its dramatic counterpart.[5] While the shadow puppet drama concludes with a brief description of the bridal couple sitting in state for a customary victory banquet ending, the literary version transforms into a lavish, highly elaborated scene of nuptial offerings, costumes, and rites, all in royal "Javanese" fashion. The legendary

[4] I am grateful to the late Ki Sutrisna, a dhalang from Klaten, for bringing this to my attention, adding, "only in 'Partakrama' is there a marriage based on *bicara* [talk, i.e., formal negotiation] between the two families involved."

[5] R. Ng. Sindusastra, *Partakrama* (composed Surakarta, 1833; inscribed by Mangunsuwirya, Surakarta, 1915). Ms. RP D59a; SMP MN 435.

scene where this occurs is immediately recognizable and assumes a certain reality as if one were attending, in fact, an 1830s wedding in the Kraton Surakarta. Yet, in light of just such detail *and* because "The Wedding of Parta"'s core story (based as it is on the Mahabharata) is mythologically endowed, the wedding here reveals a fantastic sort of reality. When the mythic Sumbadra meditates in radiant silence on her wedding eve as is customary for Javanese brides, the scene is not depicted "as if" celestial spirits (*widadari,* hence this rite is called *midadarèni*) are present; these ethereal beings actually appear, arriving as weighty guests. For the wedding proper, the gods themselves show up, fashioned as so many VIP visitors, and the young Arjuna sits perfectly immobile, groomed in nineteenth-century verse as a mythic Pakubuwana. Sindusastra's "The Wedding of Parta," thus, commemorates the 1835 wedding before its time by reversing the force of conventional heroic simile and transforming Mahabharata hero into Surakarta aristocrat rather than likening the latter to the former. The effect of such a commemoration is to establish the past as present—indeed, a present of now mythic proportions—and in the process, to install the groom as king.

Sindusastra's text was not the only one linked with the wedding of Pakubuwana VII. Prince Kusumayuda, the palace official in charge of the mission that fetched the Madurese princess, commissioned a *babad,* or "history," to record the events of his glorious mission and the festivities that followed at home. Completed by 1839, the text was composed in verse much in the style of "The Giyanti History" or "The History of Ties" and titled "The Madura History" (*Babad Madura*).[6] With the primary subject of its focus the Pakubuwana's wedding story, however, this history was quite different: like "The Wedding of Parta," "The Madura History" moved steadily toward and culminated in a royal wedding ceremony.[7]

As the wedding proper approaches in this text, all of Surakarta is

[6] R. Kapitan Jayèngrana, *Babad Madura* (composed Surakarta, 1839; inscribed Surakarta, 1861). Ms. RP B13; SMP MN 219. Jayèngrana was sent along on the Madura trip for the express purpose of recording the events as a babad in verse form.

[7] Even Rajamala, the Kraton ship used for the Madura mission, was the product of a wedding ceremony. In 1809, Pakubuwana IV received as a gift from Daendels a ship named after its female figurehead, Rajaputri. In 1811, the king ordered his son and crown prince to construct a companion ship with a male figurehead fashioned after the wayang character Rajamala. As soon as Rajamala the ship was ready, the two were "wedded, according to His Majesty's will, with bridal escort and decorations, wedded in just the way that a bridal couple is wedded [*kapanggihaken kados cara-caranipun pangantèn panggih*]. A formal reception was held on the banks of the Bridal Pool River." (See *Babad Sangkala* [SMP KS 1A], p. 78b.)

decorated with banners, offerings, and paper lanterns, thousands strung along streets, clustered at intersections, and hung outside homes, "even Chinese and Dutch homes." The lanterns are described in radiant terms—a volcano ablaze, a sea of flames—terms that sparkle audibly in Javanese alliteration: "*gebyar gebyar ting galebyur, sumilak angilat thathit, manceret mancurat muncrat.*"[8] In lantern light, the night glows like midday and the city becomes brilliantly interiorized and comparable, the text claims, to Èndraloka, the Mahabharatan abode of the Indic god Indra. By conventional simile, 1830s Surakarta is retranslated into its own mythic scene, a "Wedding of Parta" scene, for the heavenly wedding of Pakubuwana VII.

The aura of interiority that illumines both text and city here, reflects, in part, the power of ritual logistics. The bride and her Madurese entourage were lodged at the palatial residence of the Kraton prime minister (*patih*) in the city's north end. On the morning of the wedding, Pakubuwana VII rode in grand procession across town to receive his bride in formal Islamic rites of contract (nikah). "Waves of 'amen's," sounds the text, "poured out of the prime minister's audience hall into the public courtyard" where they were echoed by crowds, drums corps, and cannon salutes throughout the city. On the evening of the wedding, in the alliterative glitter of lanterns and gamelan orchestras lining the route, the palanquined Madurese princess bride then rode across town, with ceremony, to the Kraton where she would formally be wedded to her groom, and king, through the complex series of Javanese rites called the *panggih,* the "meeting," the "wedding." The entire city of Surakarta thus was drawn into the ritual scene as the roles of king and groom were drawn together publicly. Earlier, the Pakubuwana, as groom, had sent to the bride's family an offering gift (*sasrahan*), conveyed in procession to the prime minister's residence. Instead of the usual customary vegetables, however, exquisitely crafted gold peppers and silver eggplants embellished with copper-alloy foliage constituted this ensemble which was called, appropriately enough, *sasrahan raja,* the "king's sasrahan." By becoming a groom, Pakubuwana VII could perform with the singular authority and ceremonial grandeur (Who else could bestow such a gift?) that becomes a king. That is, by becoming a groom, a nineteenth-century Pakubuwana could, redoubling the significance of the 1790s wedding passage quoted in Chapter 1, "be treated like a king," royally.

A key witness for Pakubuwana VII's wedding was the Dutch Resident. This official figure personally escorted the Madurese bride into the

[8] Jayèngrana, *Babad Madura,* p. 182.

Kraton, presented her to the groom-king, and then sat in state alongside the bridal couple. Representing the colonial government, the Resident both acknowledged and at the same time potentially overshadowed the king's ceremonial exhibition of authority. Although Pakubuwana VII performed as an ideal groom ritually receiving his bride and the privilege of being treated like a king, he performed also as a Javanese king habitually receiving his old consort in affairs of state. As soon as the bride was whisked away by servants to the inner palace, the king turned to his other companion for a long series of toasts, cigars, and European card games. For the Dutch Resident was a pivotal figure in the formation of nineteenth-century "Java," a profoundly ambivalent figure demanding both respectable distance from, and intimate association with, things "Javanese."

The depth of a Resident's involvement in Surakarta royal affairs is displayed most dramatically in texts recording the wedding of Mangkunagara IV (r. 1853–81). Early in 1853 Mangkunagara III died, leaving the Mangkunagaran palace, Solo's junior palace and rival of the Kraton Surakarta, with something of a succession crisis. Of the three Mangkunagaran princes in line as replacements, the first was deemed too stupid, the second a womanizer and drunkard, and the third financially corrupt.[9] Although none of these qualitities necessarily blocked the careers of would-be rulers, Surakarta's Resident—one H. F. Buschkens (r. 1851–58), or "Mister [Tuwan] Busken," as the Javanese texts refer to him—decided instead in favor of another candidate for Mangkunagara IV, Prince Gondakusuma. Not only was this prince the patrilateral *and* matrilateral first cousin of Mangkunagara III (though the trio of rejections had equally involved genealogical claims), while in his late teens Gondakusuma had served under Buschkens in the Java War campaign and proven a dependable Dutch ally. Three days after Mangkunagara III's funeral, the Resident informed the prince of this decision; three months later, Gondakusuma assumed the Mangkunagaran throne.

No sooner was the prince in place than the Resident began speculating on a mate for this widower ruler. In the words of "The Mangkunagara IV History" (*Babad Mangkunagara IV*), "It was the will [*karsa,* an imperial "wish"] of His Highness Mister Resident, that the Prince hold a wedding ceremony."[10] The *prose,* rather than verse, form of this text facilitated an

[9] They were Hadiwijaya III, Kusumadiningrat, and Suryadiningrat.

[10] *Sajarah kanthi Babad Lalampahanipun Kangjeng Gusti Pangĕran Adipati Arya Mangkunagara ingkang kaping IV ing Surakarta* (composed and inscribed Surakarta, 1853–63). Ms. RP B66; SMP MN 224, p. 71.

inscription of dialogue that maintains exactly proper Javanese language level usage. An obvious but little noted quality of Javanese verse is that it may scramble, for prosodic reasons, Javanese language hierarchy. By contrast, this 1850s manuscript precisely and purposefully registered "Mister Busken" in prose at the apex of Javanese linguistic etiquette.

Having notified the prince of his will and his choice for bride (Princess Dunuk, eldest daughter from a queen by Mangkunagara III and Gondakusuma's own niece), Busken went straightway to the princess. "His Highness Mister Resident spoke powerfully with words that were seductive and fragrant: 'My [*ingsun,* the imperial "I"] child, Princess, you *will,* I trust, obey; for in life such is one's duty, according to ancestral practice [*ila-ila*].'"[11] Returning to Gondakusuma, Busken continued his wedding plans, again in language couched completely in the imperial imperative, and conferred his blessings on the prince, just recovering from illness. Grateful for Busken's attention, "the prince, upon receiving the word [*sabda,* speech, in this case Busken's, magically endowed with the power to activate], answered: 'Indeed, through Your Blessings, I have received mercy for soul and health for body.'"[12]

"The Mangkunagara IV History" exhibits in unusually vivid terms the Resident's intimate position in court affairs; Busken himself bestows Mangkunagaran titles and regalia (upacara) upon the prince and not infrequently performs ceremonially as the prince's stand-in. Although this 1850s Resident was indeed a busy figure in court life—the main events of this history are documented elsewhere—it is, of course, highly unlikely that H. F. Buschkens had at his command any Javanese language at all, certainly not the eloquent, almost literary verbal skills attributed to him here. Nevertheless, the text treats the Resident linguistically as a Javanese king: *ingsun,* the imperial "I." The author of this contemporaneous chronicle no doubt was mindful of the Resident's formidable colonial clout. The eloquence with which "Busken" is written into the script, however, far exceeds authorial concern for good favor. Why?

Rendering all dialogue between the Resident and Mangkunagara in courtly Javanese language rather than Melajoe or Malay (the language used in colonial administrative encounters between Dutch and native officials), "The Mangkunagara IV History" translates these characters into a highly articulated discourse of hierarchy. Whoever gives orders like those issuing from the Resident, *must* be an ingsun, an imperial "I," a king. Such a translation partly recuperates Surakartans' loss of author-

[11] Ibid., p. 72.
[12] Ibid., p. 76.

ity into the hands of the Dutch by projecting back onto Javanese language itself a sense of authority ultimately detached from the speaker, regardless of whether he is a Surakarta aristocrat or a "Mister Busken." Because it is most improbable that Resident Buschkens's Dutch mouth really uttered such words, the power of his colonial command is implicitly reclaimed as it is rewritten in Javanese, following essentially the logic that motivated the appropriation of "Dutch style" into an emerging catalog of "Javanese" fashion.

But there is more, for this is not the only point of "Javanese" appropriation written into "The Mangkunagara IV History." When Busken sweet-talks the princess by citing the "ila-ila"—ancestral practice, the quasi-esoteric rules of prescribed and tabooed behavior—he does so *as if* these practices were his own, as if he, too, somehow felt the cultural weight of their obligations. It thus appears entirely natural, in this text, that when Prince Mangkunagara prepares for his wedding he searches out "Resident and Lady Busken" for approval and cultural guidance. Both are only too eager to counsel. Mister Busken:

> "And if there's anything lacking, I'll [*ingsun,* again] take care of it." . . .
> Her Lady the Mistress added: "Again, Prince, whatever you'd like in terms of decorations and costumes, only the finest, with jewels. So that you have them soon, I [*ingsun,* too!] myself'll go to Semarang. Or bought goods, fine things, if there's something you still don't have, I'll go myself. Whatever you want, just jot it down, how many and what kinds."[13]

The Resident and Mistress in "The Mangkunagara IV History" obviously enjoy being drawn into service for the formal wedding ceremony that followed, a ceremony whose lush detail need not detain us. Through "Busken," Dutch colonial authority is circumscribed linguistically in Javanese by a customary world equipped with its own undeniable attractions and obligations. This midnineteenth-century chronicle is written as if the Resident himself had been thoroughly domesticated or, better yet, that upon reflection he had turned out really to be a good "Javanese" after all.

Along with the peculiar sense of power gained through this text's translation of Dutch colonial authority into Javanese come, however, two necessary implications (which recall, in turn, the implications of Pakubuwana III's appropriation of "Dutch style"). The first is that Mangkunagara IV necessarily addresses "His Majesty" the Resident in

[13] Ibid., p. 81.

quintessentially groveling (or elevating, depending on one's point of view) Javanese terms. Because this is more immediately conceivable than the Resident's Javanese regal addresses, it is all the more startling: conceivable because as a Javanese the prince could, of course, use such terms; startling if as Prince Mangkunagara, ruler of the palace, he would. Perhaps the almost familial bond between Gondakusuma and H. F. Buschkens made such terms vaguely possible. Or perhaps, too, the text's dialogue between the two remains an impossible dream, and the prince's eloquent oral prostration an issue of literary fantasy, an ideal model for lesser courtiers.

The second implication is less direct, yet far more serious. Because "The Mangkunagara IV History" recuperates authority by translating the Resident's colonial commands into Javanese words outside the Resident's mastery, thereby transferring the authority of the speaker onto the Javanese language itself, what does this mean for other ingsun speakers?—What, in particular, for *the* ingsun of Java, His Majesty the Pakubuwana? Once Busken speaks in kingly Javanese (with the performative power of Javanese *sabda!*) a *double* displacement of authority is inscribed: not only is colonial authority displaced but along with it Pakubuwanan (or Mangkunagaran) authority, leaving the Pakubuwana himself now implicitly immobilized and detached from his own power of command. Although the colonial immobilization of Pakubuwanas may have been achieved by 1830, by the 1850s, the Pakubuwana would be transformed into a purely linguistic image of "Javanese" authority: a reigning icon of ingsun, an imperial "I." Such a displacement of authority (both colonial and Pakubuwanan) sustained, as it represented, the displacement of kingdom that had occurred one century earlier. From the Kraton Surakarta's contradictory creation as a kingdom borne on ritual arose, eventually, both Pakubuwanan authority and Dutch sabda, the latter phrase a powerfully literal contra-diction.

The line between "The Mangkunagara IV History" fantasy "Java" and the ceremonial conditions of 1850s Surakarta appears to have been, at times, extraordinarily thin. On May 1, 1853, Resident H. F. Buschkens did indeed perform ceremoniously as official guardian and stand-in parent for Mangkunagara IV and escorted the groom through formal wedding rites held at the Mangkunagaran Palace. Moreover, in an equally remarkable gesture of ceremony (unprecedented in Kraton-Mangkunagaran interaction), Pakubuwana VII performed as the bride's guardian and escort (*wali*). The 1853 wedding thus celebrated a new, midnineteenth-century master alliance in which the Dutch Resident and the Pakubuwana became (as court chronicles carefully noted) *bésan,* "mutual parents-in-law." As in-laws, the two characters shared a familiar

niche within the structure of Javanese kin relations and acquired status that was, for ritual purposes at least, equivalent.

It is likely that at the 1853 wedding H. F. Buschkens and his regal in-law exchanged numerous pleasantries and toasts in Malay and, perhaps, even made plans for the next get-together in their routine schedule of outings. When Pakubuwana VII and Mister Busken make their textual appearance together in "The Mangkunagara IV History," however, there is never dialogue between the two; they maintain a conspicuous silence like two closet ingsun. For either to address the other with the linguistic imperative of a king would disrupt the particular structure of authority written into this manuscript, a thoroughly "Javanese" authority which domesticates colonial authority, turns would-be political rivals into ritual in-laws, and treats Dutch Residents and Mistresses as Surakarta kin.[14]

Wedding Subjects 2
Lessons from "Javaland"

The other pair of prestigious Surakarta weddings warranting textual exploration—again, one from the Kraton Surakarta, one from the Mangkunagaran—occurred later in the nineteenth century. In 1865, the

[14] Mindful of the nature of this particular authority, on May 6, 1853, one five-day Javanese market week after the wedding proper, H. F. Buschkens and his wife fulfilled their ritual obligations as "parents" of Mangkunagara IV and hosted their own *undhuh*, a customary follow-up event conventionally held at the home of the groom's own family.

As enthusiastic about Javanese custom as the Buschkens were, they were, of course, not the first (much less the last) Resident and wife eager to become involved in native ritual life. At a Kraton wedding in 1828, the attending Resident and wife joined the bridal pair in the inner chamber and sat cross-legged (*sila*) with them. The Resident's English guest, tagging along for the experience, entered in his journal: "We remained about half an hour in this familiar position conversing with them [the bridal couple]; this seemed to please them much, especially when the Resident took the bride and bride-groom, one on each knee, in the Javanese way, and called them his children" ("Journal of an Excursion" [1853], p. 19). The wedding ceremonies continued for several days, and the Englishman began to weary: "It seems to be a very fatiguing ceremony indeed, this marrying, among the Javanese nobility—'they order these things better in England,' *I* think, but the Javanese would not" (p. 140, emphasis in the original). Nor, obviously, would many nineteenth-century Surakarta Dutch residents (although, to approach colonial Surakarta rituals through the lenses of Dutch cultural history would mean starting from the other side of the limits drawn here). The Resident and his family hosted the Kraton bridal couple and their entourage for several days and even provided theatrical entertainment in the form of a comedy in five acts: August Friedrich Ferdinand von Kotzebue's "Der Wirrwarr" or "Confusion" (translated into Dutch as "De Verwarring" in 1803), a domestic farce centering on a henpecked husband.

wedding of Pakubuwana IX (r. 1861–93) became the focus of a substantial Kraton manuscript. Unlike the 1830s "Madura History," whose story was not really a history of Madura but an account of Pakubuwana VII's marriage to a Madurese princess, this 1860s manuscript now wore a title that self-consciously fitted the wedding subject, "The History of His Highness Pakubuwana IX's Wedding" (*Babad Krama Dalem Pakubuwana IX*). The text is, in fact, so devoted to the ceremony proper that it does not even record the remarkable story behind Pakubuwana IX's selection of his bride despite the trace of history in its title. Accounts from Pakubuwana IX's grandchildren, nevertheless, tell of the Assistant Resident's indirect role in providing a mate for this queenless king.[15] On October 19, 1865, Assistant Resident van Vrins held a wedding reception in celebration of his own marriage to the daughter of a factory administrator.[16] Gracing this occasion were Pakubuwana IX and R. A. Koestijah, daughter of a genealogically elite Surakarta family.[17] Dressed Dutch as a "Major General," the Pakubuwana joined other guests for an evening of waltzes and toasts at the Assistant Resident's home. Around midnight, the dancing was interrupted when a radiant sphere of heavenly light, a *cahya*—just the kind that descends in a flash on those few fortunate Javanese souls destined to become king—the "size of a coconut" suddenly shot out of the southwest sky, hovered for a moment over van Vrins's house, then entered, and finally settled upon Koestijah's head, endowing the young woman with an irrestible halo glow. Within an hour, Pakubuwana IX was back in the palace plotting his proposal to her. In Surakarta of the 1860s, a Dutch dance floor was, it appears, as likely a spot as any for a Javanese king to receive divine inspiration.

The account of the Kraton wedding resulting from this inspiration, "The History of His Highness Pakubuwana IX's Wedding," generally parallels the relatively abbreviated description of Pakubuwana VII's 1835 wedding in "The Madura History." Yet the extreme detail furnished by the 159-page 1865 manuscript provides an in-house view of unprecedented focus disclosing a new-found scribal status for the royal

[15] The story that follows was published in various early twentieth-century formats. The 1924 account presented here comes from *Jatno-Hisworo* (N.p.: Djawa Timoer, [1924] 1952), pp. 29–30.

[16] This was by no means the first Dutch marriage to be entered into Javanese records. One of the earliest weddings appearing in the mideighteenth-century chronicle *Babad Giyanti* joins a Dutch couple.

[17] Koestijah was a daughter of Hadiwijaya II and, in fact, Pakubuwana IX's *misan;* both she and her groom shared Pakubuwana IV as a great-grandfather.

Fig. 2. Pakubuwana IX (r. 1861–93), whose mystical eye, it is said, watched events as they happened anywhere in the world. Courtesy the Mangkunagaran Palace.

wedding subject. On December 4, 1865, after the morning ritual vows, cannon salutes sound continuously, all dutifully inscribed in the text.[18] With the prolonged evening event, however, comes the textual centerpiece: the panggih, the series of ritual encounters within which Pakubuwana IX and his bride "meet" and are, thus, wedded. Because this text's lengthy and precise account of panggih choreography is particularly suggestive concerning the conflation of the roles of king and groom, it demands special attention.

When Javanese kings hosted weddings, that is, married a princess or prince (the latter of far less significance, unless a crown prince), the king's dual role as both ruler and father was ceremonially unproblematic; built into each of these roles was, by Javanese reckoning, part of the other's authority. (Recall, for example, that in 1762 Pakubuwana III held, with full authority, his princess daughter and her groom in the panggih's customary "lap rite.") But when a Javanese king, already enthroned, took a wife for queen and was *himself* wedded and ritually subjected as a groom, his authority as king was potentially compromised. Yes, by becoming a groom, as noted earlier, Pakubuwana VII was permitted the public display of grandeur that becomes a king. But no matter how great the prestige granted a Javanese groom, imbedded within the choreography of the panggih itself—a practice that applied not only to Javanese royalty but, albeit more modestly, to commoners as well—were certain gestures inconceivable for a king. What lap, for example, could possibly hold His Majesty?

The contradiction posed by the superimposition of the roles of king and groom was overcome ritually, as "The History of His Highness Pakubuwana IX's Wedding" demonstrates, by means of a modified panggih. Rather than walking in a groom's procession to the edge of the Kraton's central pavilion, entering the pavilion, and meeting the bride just as she emerges from her wait within the palace (through the series of

[18] Such cannon salutes steadily increased in number and duration from the late eighteenth century on. Even during the Java War, the Kraton Surakarta did not neglect its ceremonial duties, as our English visitor observed on August 21, 1828: "This is the anniversary of the birth of his Majesty the King of the Netherlands, on which occasion a royal salute was fired, Solo being one of the few places where this is still allowed to be done;—it has been abolished almost everywhere from motives of economy. The salute consists of 101 guns which are fired in this manner—33 at eight in the morning, 35 at noon, 33 at 4 in the afternoon" ("Journal of an Excursion" (1854), p. 83). Visitors to the Kraton today will note the numerous royal cannons permanently positioned on cement bases fashioned in the form of wheels. It is not clear exactly when these pieces of artillery were frozen in their present positions; in any case, if they ever were actually loaded with balls, they would blow away many of the palace buildings in their permanent line of "fire."

rites that comprise the conventional panggih), the Pakubuwana instead entered the central pavilion *together* with his bride in formal procession and, following a brief handshake with the Resident, directly sat in state. All ceremonial problematics properly circumvented (and the bride removed at once into the inner palace), the Pakubuwana could now sit perfectly immobile (with the Resident close at hand) displaying the cultural authority that becomes both a groom *and* king.[19]

The augmented authority the king derived by becoming a groom "treated royally" is most evident in "The History of His Highness Pakubuwana IX's Wedding" during the series of seven formal toasts (*kondhisi*) of Madeira that followed the panggih. The order of toasts was critically significant to both the Pakubuwana and the Resident (representing the colonial government), a significance echoed by the lengthy rounds of cheers, brass band and gamelan salutes, cannon salvos, waltzing, and champagne uncorking ("*blug*, popped like firecrackers," records the text) that each toast could provoke.

First: "To His Highness's wedding!" (*panggih dalem*)
Second: "To the king of the Netherlands!" (Willem III)
Third: "To the governor-general of the Indies!"
Fourth: "To Pakubuwana IX!"[20]

Initial toasts such as these were always made by the Resident, as was the custom. On other occasions, "To the king of the Netherlands!" would have been first, then "To the governor-general!" and so on, down the highly regularized list of authorities. By virtue of this occasion, however, "To His Highness's wedding!" ceremonially reigns. Yet even this momentary gain in prestige is placed in check when the Resident toasts "To Pakubuwana IX!"—"king"—fourth in line. A well-calculated ambivalence concerning the augmented status of the groom-king thus was written into the structure of the first four toasts: only as groom did this Javanese king reign supreme.

[19] This sort of panggih is also suggested in the relatively limited account of Pakubuwana VII's wedding in *Babad Madura*, although in the 1835 ceremony the Resident plays a more visible role.

[20] R. Atmadikara, *Babad Krama-dalem Ingkang Sinuhun Kangjeng Susuhunan Pakubuwana kaping sanga ing Nagari Surakarta-Adiningrat* (composed Surakarta, 1865–66; inscribed Surakarta, mid–late nineteenth century). Ms. Rp 310; SMP RP 59, pp. 61 verso and 61 recto. Of the toasts listed here, the toast to Willem III was in Dutch—*"Risidhèn . . . ngucap basa Walandi"*—all others were in Malay, sometimes followed with a translation into Dutch.

The Pakubuwana then immediately returned the favor by offering a toast—fifth in the series, the only toast Pakubuwana IX himself would make—"To Mister Resident!" The Resident then finished the sequence of toasts:

Sixth: "To His Highness's wife!" (*garwa dalem,* the bride)
Seventh: "To Java!" (*tanah Jawa*)

The series ends perfectly on track with the Resident's customary shout, "To Java!" This is not colonial Java, administative territory of the Dutch East Indies, but *tanah Jawa,* the "land of Java," a land of legendary abundance, the mythic "Java." The Resident's final, and perhaps, crowning toast, thus, is proposed to a sort of fantasy "Javaland," a model realm ruled by kingly monarchs and animated by its own customs, ceremoniousness, and appearance of order. In 1860s "Java," a groom still comes first (as Huprup Béman had learned one century earlier), even before Willem III. In Chapter 3, I will return to an additional, supplementary significance inscribed within "The History of His Highness Pakubuwana IX's Wedding." I turn now, however, to the remaining, and in many respects most celebrated, wedding scene from nineteenth-century Surakarta.

Not long after Mangkunagara IV was, thanks to Mister Busken, enthroned and wedded to Princess Dunuk in 1853, he produced a short didactic poem pertaining to the ethics behind marriage and the proper choice of mate, "A Lesson in Character Direction" (*Warayagnya*). The poem was among the first in a stream of mid-to-late nineteenth-century literary texts attributed to Mangkunagara IV, texts including poetic chronicles, lyrical commemoratives and conundrums, and moralistic treatises.[21] Like so many Mangkunagara IV pieces, "A Lesson in Character Direction" was addressed to the prince's own children and thus, by implication, to all Javanese culturally coming of age. Nearing its conclusion, "A Lesson" advises the boys: "It's no easy matter for a person to marry, / you must choose a woman that's right / to be made into a companion for life."[22]

[21] Regardless of whether Mangkunagara IV actually composed all this, he at least seems to have authorized enough of it to become recognized as a gifted author of Javanese literature. Composed in 1856, *Warayagnya* was probably the first literary text authored by Mangkunagara IV after coming to office.

[22] K. G. P. A. A. Mangkunagara IV, *Warayagnya* [composed Surakarta, 1856], in *Serat Serat Anggitan Dalem K. G. P. A. A. Mangkunagara IV,* ed. Th. Pigeaud (Soerakarta: Java-Instituut [de Bliksem], 1927), 3:5.

The correct choice of "a companion for life" should be directed by three principles whose calculated alliterativeness seems to reinforce an inner logic: *bobot* (prestige), *bèbèt* (lineage), and *bibit* (seed). More than any other nineteenth-century Surakarta ruler, Mangkunagara IV would equip "Java" with its dominant cultural themes and moralistic style. Future generations of twentieth-century Javanese would look back to this prince for proof of a vast cultural inheritance and privileged heritage, for a sense of, perhaps, prestige-pedigree-potential. Mangkunagara IV's classic "Exemplary Wisdom" (*Wéddhatama*), a lengthy and abstruse didactic idealization of moral values, remains the most frequently cited textual evidence for the purportedly sublime (*adiluhung*) nature of Javanese culture.[23] That Mangkunagara IV's own choice of mate just a few years before authoring "A Lesson in Character Direction" had, in fact, been directed by H. F. Buschkens no doubt heightened the prince's devotion to "Java." For it was precisely in response to the implications of Dutch colonial rule that the figure "Java" would prove so commanding.

Of all of the prince's literary accomplishments, his longest work (six times the size of "Exemplary Wisdom") recorded, most significantly for the present discussion, a wedding ceremony. By 1877, Mangkunagara IV's eldest son and crown prince (the future Mangkunagara V, r. 1881–96) was ready for marriage. The choice was R. A. Kusmardinah, a daughter of the same elite Surakarta family that had supplied both Pakubuwana IX and Mangkunagara IV their queens.[24] The volume devoted to recording the 1877 nuptials bore a title that again clearly fit its subject, *Wiwahan Dalem* (His Highness's Wiwaha)—the former term an archaism for "wedding celebration," the complete title a neoclassicism modeled on no less a literary legend than the eleventh-century Old Javanese poem "Arjuna Wiwaha" (The wedding of Arjuna)—thus, "His Highness's Wedding Celebration."[25]

[23] For a critical discussion of the *Wéddhatama* and its privileged position in the the cult of the *adiluhung*, see Nancy K. Florida, "Reading the Unread in Traditional Javanese Literature," *Indonesia* 44 (1987): 4–5.

[24] Kusmardinah was a daughter of Hadiwijaya III and Dénok, Dunuk's younger sister. The 1877 bride thus was Mangkunagara V's matrilateral first cousin. Through Hadiwijaya III she was Mangkunagara IV's niece and Pakubuwana VIII's great-granddaughter as well. Such tangled Surakarta genealogical ties continue to provide material for gossip in court circles today. Dénok, it is said, was shunned until death by Hadiwijaya III; hence, Dunuk attempted to block the 1877 marriage for the sake of revenge. Once wedded, it was left to Mangkunagara V himself to enjoy revenge by ignoring Kusmardinah until she died, taking on as many mistresses as possible, and then refusing to attend his wife's funeral.

[25] For a synopsis and discussion of the Kakawin "Arjunawiwaha," see P. J. Zoetmulder, *Kalangwan: A Survey of Old Javanese Literature* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), pp. 234–50.

Fig. 3. The bust of Mangkunagara IV (at the Colomadu sugar factory, founded by Mangkunagara IV in 1861), erected by Mangkunagara VII in 1937, receives an offering in 1984.

In "Wedding Celebration," Mangkunagara IV rules as guardian of Javanese custom, a Buskenesque fatherly figure of authority, a model imperial "I" (ingsun). The text:

> Now then, His Highness the Prince [Mangkunagara IV]
> made his entrance from within the palace
> in procession with his regalia,
> the troops appearing in formation before him,
> and at once summoned his son,
> His Highness [Crown Prince] Prangwadana,
> who upon arriving
> bowed in obeisance. The father spoke calmly,
> "My boy, presently will you
>
> be attended in ceremony commencing today
> within your palace quarters."
> The son responded by
> bowing and kissing [the father's] feet.
> The father spoke once more,
> "My boy, return now to your quarters,
> but first I [ingsun] tell you this:
> Obey the customs [cara] for wedding!"
> The youth replied with a bow then departed,
> escorted by his uncles.[26]

The magnified sense of moral obligation attached to custom in "Wedding Celebration" produces a wedding text most faithful in its portrayal. That is, scenes are lavished with detail that is more devotional in mood, than actually devoted to specifics. The panggih sequence, for example, opens in this fashion:

> Completely prepared the task's preparations
> all ritual requisites
> properly placed in this ceremonial space,
> whereupon the princess
> was seated within,
> just in front of the inner hall's innermost chamber.

[26] K. G. P. A. A. Mangkunagara IV, *Wiwahan Dalem Kangjeng Pangéran Adipati Ariya Prabu Prangwadana*, in *Serat Serat Anggitan Dalem K. G. P. A. A. Mangkunagara IV*, ed. Th. Pigeaud (Soerakarta: Java-Instituut [de Bliksem], 1927), 1:151–52.

The bridegroom was escorted in
led at a gentle pace,
at the edge of the inner hall he arrived,
then accompanied by the bride,
upon the threshold
the [betel nut] tossing rite was completed.[27]

Rather than detailing the specifics, say, of the groom's attire—"The History of His Highness Pakubuwana IX's Wedding" devotes entire stanzas to buttons and embroidery—"Wedding Celebration" glosses its subject as a *finished* picture, an inscribed set of ceremonial steps and completed rites, a faithful representation of obligations fully satisfied.

What replaces material detail in "Wedding Celebration" is a lushness of literary style characteristic of much verse attributed to Mangkunagara IV. Dense alliteration and assonance create a descriptive texture whose very seamlessness tends to bypass material specifics such as, say, buttons.[28] Thus endowed, the text moves instead toward effusive and explicit invocations of mood or feeling(s) (*tyas*). While fulfilling the last of the panggih rites, the bride and groom, now kneeling in complete submission before Mangkunagara IV, are portrayed as *muriring murinding,* "shivering with fear, hair standing on end." The text presents this moment, in fact, as the tenderest of all moments. The entire hall is immediately *tyas nityasa trenyuh,* affected, alliteratively, by a "mood most deeply moving." Acts of obeisance become profoundly moving, even hair raising, as they embody a special sensitivity, an acute responsiveness to scenes of subservience. The feelings inscribed in "Wedding Celebration" are most pronounced when displayed before figures of authority. For with such authority comes not only a representation of the force of "custom," as Mangkunagara IV put it—or "ancestral practice," as Busken before him—but, in turn, the possibility of a presentation of blessings.

Just after the bride and groom are seated in state, the text's attention drifts with the reflection of lights in the palace and arrives at this fantasy:

The competing rays and radiances within the hall,
truly fitting when viewed,
added to the noble ladies' pleasure;

[27] Ibid., p. 201.

[28] When applied to a patently philosophical or, at least, moralistic subject as in *Wéddhatama,* this style produces the sense of adiluhung—the mystique of a lushly wrought vacuity.

it was as if Sedana and Sri
had descended into
the great wedding hall.[29]

The benevolent appearance of Sedana and Sri, the Javanese god and goddess of prosperity and fertility, finds its companion fantasy just a few stanzas later when the bride and groom are formally introduced to the Resident and his wife,

who with handshakes bestowed their blessings.
Following behind
the Dutch ladies crowded around

and with the Dutch gentlemen gave their blessings
coming forward one after another.
Upon reflection, one had the impression that
gods [*jawata*] and goddesses [*apsari*]
had descended bringing good fortune
to the newlyweds.[30]

Now this last lucky bestowal of blessings, ostensibly from Dutch dignitaries and guests, "upon reflection" turns out to come from "Javanese" gods and goddesses: these jawata and apsari are *indigenous* spiritual benefactors, not some sort of foreign *goden.* With this, coverage of the wedding celebration proper is complete as the Dutch are made respectable, yet again, precisely with respect to the authority of "Java."

The same sense of authority that guides "Wedding Celebration" underpins most Mangkunagara IV writings, particularly his celebrated "lessons" (*piwulang*).[31] From the modest 1856 "A Lesson in Character Direction" to the grandiose "Exemplary Wisdom," the language of the lessons is the language of authority speaking its instructions to the next generation. In its opening stanza, "Exemplary Wisdom" proclaims as its subject "the knowledge sublime [luhung] / which in the land of Java [tanah Jawi] / is the religion [*agama*] of the rulers."[32] Imagined for "Javaland" is an appropriately ideal religion (agama) that (in contradis-

[29] Mangkunagara IV, *Wiwahan Dalem,* p. 204.

[30] Ibid., p. 205.

[31] The collected lessons were published as early as 1898 as *Serat Piwulang Warni Warni: Anggitan Dalem Suwargi Kangjeng Gusti Pangéran Adipati Arya Mangkunagara IV,* ed. Ki Padmasusastra (Surakarta: Albert Rusche, 1898).

[32] Florida's translation, "Reading the Unread," p. 4.

tinction, e.g., to the religions of Islam and Christianity) revolves around the sublime, kneels in graceful obeisance toward rulers (rather than in prayer toward Mecca or Christ), and in return receives blessings. The essence of such a religion would be the very structure of command through which "it," in the form of characteristically elusive blessings (see Chap. 7), *appears* to be handed down and thereby communicated: from ruler to subject, father to child, and ingsun to underling, from Mister Busken to Mangkunagara IV, and Mangkunagara IV to his children, perhaps even from "Exemplary Wisdom" to New Order Javanese. Exhibiting explicitly moving scenes of obeisance and touching instances of bestowment, the 1877 wedding text brings to life, as it were, the prince's lessons. In effect, "Wedding Celebration" furnishes the "Exemplary Wisdom" religion with a liturgy and a fully choreographed one at that.

From the late eighteenth-century "History of Ties" years on, the royal wedding ceremony represented a new order of cultural domestication in Surakarta, an order that had accrued with time a singular sense of "Javanese" authority. Surakarta rulers, the centerpieces around whom cultural order was envisioned and inscribed, shared in this authority—almost vicariously, as grooms and exemplary bearers of custom—by becoming "kings," reinvested icons of the imperial "I." Mangkunagara IV's "Wedding Celebration" added unprecedented weight to the kingly figure of cultural authority by superimposing the roles of ruler, father, tutor, and author onto the projected sovereignty of "Javanese" custom. When the ruler commands his son, the crown prince—"Obey the customs for wedding!"—it is as if the phantasmatic figure of "Java" itself somehow had come to life and were giving the orders. The textual figure of the royal wedding achieved, in turn, its own late nineteenth-century perfection in the highly evocative "Wedding Celebration." It had become an elaborated literary subject, and, through elaboration, a "deeply moving" customary figuration ascribed hair-raising subjectivity.

A Companion for Life (or, His Highness, the Resident, etcetera)

Surrounding royal weddings was, of course, a vast world of nineteenth-century palace customs through which the authority of Surakarta rulers was variously represented. Annual assemblies of the realm, monthly commemorations of the ruler's cosmological age, weekly royal audiences and drills of His Majesty's troops, frequent receptions for foreign dignitaries, and other similar affairs of state all placed these

palaces in perpetual ceremonial motion. Such occasions customarily included a place for the Resident, a special chair from which the Dutch official could observe events and act as a privileged witness. More often than not the Resident was placed center stage, right alongside His Highness. Part of the appeal that royal weddings held for Surakarta's elite was, as we have seen, the heightened centrality of a thoroughly "Javanese" authority, a cultural authority self-confident enough to translate Dutch Residents and their wives into "Javanese" hosts and kin, even into indigenous gods and goddesses. Weddings seemed to bring explicitly "Javanese" rules into focus, and with them, Surakarta rulers.

At most palace ceremonies, the Resident attended as a sort of ritual superguest authorized by the colonial government and under direct orders from the governor-general. The Resident's official role was, in fact, so evident that his presence was capable of overshadowing the entire event unless somehow held in ceremonial check. The intimate yet brittle relationship between Surakarta rulers and their Residents thus was governed by a constantly refined set of rules like those contained in "The Book of Nobility" and other royal compendia of order, rules that registered reciprocal obligations and customs of correlative status.

Between the Kraton Surakarta and the Resident's Loji was routinely transacted, for example, an exchange of food. The prescriptive nature of this exchange had already caught the attention of the English visitor to Solo in 1828:

> According to a long established custom, the Resident is obliged to send every day to the Susunan [Pakubuwana VI] a number of dishes, (not less than four) from his kitchen, for the royal dinner,—they usually consist of fowls, prepared in various ways, to which pastry, or fish and vegetables are sometimes added. In return the Susunan from time to time sends the Resident *one* mango, or *two* oranges of a particular *kind,* according to which the value of the gift is estimated, and not the quantity—whatever it may be, it is invariably carried under the gilt Payong or royal Umbrella.[33]

A similar reciprocity was observed in musical salutations. The gamelan orchestra's obligatory tolling of respect for the Pakubuwana's regal entrances and exits had its counterpart. On June 30, 1828, as the Resident made what the English observer dubbed in his journal a "funeral pace" arrival at the Kraton with offical escort and a letter from the governor-general, the journal reads, "A band of Javanese musicians, with Eu-

[33] "Journal of an Excursion," p. 139 (emphasis in the original).

ropean brass instruments (in front of which *a fiddle* was conspicuous) *attempted* to play *William of Nassau,* the national air of the Netherlands, when the Resident passed."[34] The Pakubuwana and Resident each had his own readily identifiable signs of respect with which to encounter the prestige of the other.

The politics of prestige clearly were loaded, from the point of view of Dutch administrators at least, in favor of the colonizers from the days of Daendels on. Whenever toasts were demanded, Willem or Wilhelmina of the Netherlands and "Grandfather," the governor-general in Batavia, always won over a Pakubuwana, except, as suggested earlier, on the occasion of "His Highness's wedding." Such was established custom. One of the most public displays of respect for Dutch authority expected of Central Javanese rulers was the Tedhak Loji. This was the cross-town royal progress which drew Javanese monarchs out of the palace only to parade them in a formal procession headed straight for the Loji, the Resident's administrative mansion. Pakubuwanas frequently circumvented this custom by sending on their behalf two palace officials. This substitution occurred so regularly, in fact, that the circumvention itself became an established custom, the Tabé, a ceremonious conveyance of greetings. The inquisitive Englishman encountered the following during his stay at the Loji:

> I was witness today to a singular ceremony, being a part of the regulated etiquette between the Court and European authorities. Two minor chiefs belonging to the Palace, in the Court dress (i.e., *undressed* from the waist up), with their hair hanging down in one long bunch behind, and their sarongs or petticoats twisted over their krises, came to the Residency, and advanced in silence, and very formally, up the front steps into the verandah, where the Resident came to receive them. Taking their caps off, and standing together right before the Resident, who also stood, they communicated to him the *tabé,* or compliments of the Susunan [Pakubuwana VI]. . . . This ceremony takes place 3 times a week.[35]

In this ceremony, Pakubuwanas thus drew the Resident out onto the Loji verandah as if to greet the king and then performed a ritual "no-show" by staying home in the Kraton. Modest as it was, the Tabé routinely represented a sort of mini-coup in custom.[36]

[34] Ibid., p. 9 (emphasis in the original).

[35] Ibid., pp. 138–39.

[36] At the end of nineteenth century, the Tabé was still going strong as an 1889 English visitor to Solo observed: "[At the Loji] two of the Emperor's [Pakubuwana IX] aide-de-camps . . . began, in a high-pitched tone, to announce to the Resident that the Emperor and

Certain events at the Residency, however, demanded unconditionally that the Pakubuwana himself attend, in person, just as surely as there were times that unconditionally called for the national air of the Netherlands, even if intoned on a brass band led by a fiddle. Foremost among these was the annual celebration honoring the incumbent Dutch monarch's date of birth, an empirewide birthday party that in Surakarta was energetically observed. Under Willem I–III (r. 1815–90), this birthday celebration was known in the Indies as the "King's Fest" (Pista Raja) or the "King's Year" (Tahun Raja). With Wilhelmina (r. 1890–1948), born as she was on August 31, 1880, the celebration was known simply as the "August Event" (Agustusan) and was apparently perceived by Surakartans more as a general festival of royalty than a strictly personal tribute to the Dutch monarch.

Central to the King's Fest was the Pakubuwana's requisite execution of Tedhak Loji. This particular procession to the Resident's mansion was unusually deluxe and spotlighted the Pakubuwana in person—accompanied by regalia, royal family, and courtiers—performing majestically. Even the potentially most revealing of the Dutch demands on a native ruler thus was ritually transformed to the partial advantage of Pakubuwanan prestige.[37] For if the King's Fest required a Surakarta ruler's personal communication of compliments, king-to-king as it were, then all the relations of this extended royal family, including the Pakubuwana himself, somehow belonged.

Pakubuwanan ritual appropriation of prestige was, again from the perspective of Dutch administrators, greatly facilitated by colonial policy. Forever mindful of the special relationship between the native kings of Central Java's so-called Principalities (Vorstenlanden) and Residents, colonial administrators gave the Pakubuwana special treatment, just the kind a native *vorst* seemed to deserve. This treatment was most evident in the innumerable honorary titles and medals of recognition from foreign

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his family were all in good health, and that he sent his salutations to his Excellency, and took the opportunity of informing him that there would be no tournament in the Kraton Square that day. . . . Not a muscle of their faces relaxed as they went through this ridiculous ceremony. Since 1830 the Emperors have not been allowed to leave their Kraton without the Resident's permission! The tournament was, therefore, given up, but this very curious weekly custom of polite salutations between the rival powers in this 'City of Heroes' [Surakarta] still survives" (Arthur Earle, "A Month in Java in 1889," typescript, pp. 29–30). I am grateful to Nancy Florida for bringing her photocopy of this diary to my attention.

[37] In the early 1980s, older Surakartans recalled the Mulud Sekatèn festival *and* (to my initial surprise) the Agustusan Tedhak Loji as the most public of Kraton events.

authorities bestowed upon Javanese kings via colonial officials: the Grand-cross of the Order of the Netherlands Lion (in Javanese, "Grut Kréis ing Ordhe Néderlansen Léyo"), Grand-cross of Knighthood of the Order of Orange Nassau, Rank of Major General in the Netherlands Royal Guard, Grand-cross of the Order of Leopold II of Belgium, Grand-cross of the Crown Order of Siam, Knighthood Second Class and a Star from the Order of the Red Eagle in Prussia, Commander with Star of the Order of Franz Josef in Austria, Grand-cross Second Grade of the Order of the Double Dragon—in Javanese, "Dhubbelendrak"!—of China, and so on, through an immense ceremonial arsenal of grand-crosses, noble stars, and similar figures of knighthood.[38]

These honorary titles were transliterated by Kraton officials into Javanese script, a faithfully executed although really impossible task given alien mouthfuls such as "Koninklijke Orde van Verdienste." Whenever the Pakubuwana made a royal proclamation or authorized an official ordinance, these Javanized titles dutifully followed his name, already a lengthy string of Javanese honorifics, and filled the beginning pages of palace documents announcing such decrees. The titles accompanied "His Highness" and hung, like the medals they represented, on a power of graphic indecipherability. By the early twentieth century, Kraton ordinances were published bilingually, with the left column in Javanese script beginning with "His Highness the Pakubuwana" and reading through several pages of medals on down to, for example, "Dhubbelendrak." The right column, in Dutch, read more efficiently: "Zijne Vorstelijke Hoogheid den Soesoehoenan Pakoeboewono Enz. Enz." (His Royal Highness the Susuhunan Pakubuwana Etc. Etc.), followed by pages of right-column blankness. For all His Highness's considerable accumulation of prestige, through Dutch administrative lenses the Pakubuwana was, in the end, a great ceremonial "en zo voort," a royal "Etc."

As loaded as the politics of prestige were, there was, thus, a pronounced rivalry between Pakubuwanan authority and Dutch administrative authority; each moved strategically to appropriate and incorporate the prestige of the other. Kraton and Loji readings of terms such as the "King's Fest" and "Knighthood in the Order of Orange-Nassau" differed significantly and, at the same time, were informed by that difference. This did not mean that either the Loji or the Kraton somehow fully comprehended the nature of its rival. Instead, at the level of ceremony an appearance of balance emerged between the two authorities, a balance

[38] I am grateful to Ben Anderson for his help in identifying these honorary titles and medals.

that *might* give equal weight to both the Loji's official representative and the Kraton's iconic representation, to Mister Resident and His Highness the Pakubuwana, to a daily delivery of Dutch victuals and one imperial mango.

The profound ambivalence vis-à-vis authority assumed by such a balance reverberated most forcefully in the ominous sounding couplet *Kangjeng Gupermèn,* the Javanized expression referring to the colonial government of the Netherlands Indies. While *Gupermèn* derived from the Dutch word *gouvernement, Kangjeng* itself performed as a *Javanese* honorific for the highest of aristocrats; hence, "His Highness the [Dutch colonial] Government." This wedding of differences thus acknowledged the empowered, almost alien presence of Gupermèn by immediately transforming that presence into Javanese Kangjeng-hood. Although this expression might have implied a possibility of recuperation similar to that borne by *cara Walandi* as it gave rise to *cara Jawi,* that possibility would not fully emerge; there could be no purely "Javanese" equivalent to *Kangjeng Gupermèn* because such an equivalence of difference was contained within the expression itself. That is, *Kangjeng Gupermèn* was *already* "Javanese" and, at the same time, respectfully acknowledged the presence of another authority, one beyond reach. In light of the singular conjunction of difference represented by this expression, a typically colonial authority was sustained in Surakarta.

At the center of the conjunction sat the Pakubuwana and Resident. The ritual delicateness with which these two approached one another no doubt was heightened by their shared awareness that much of the special treatment granted Central Java's "native rulers" came directly through the Resident's hands. No sooner did the rounds of toasts turn to honor the Pakubuwana, than the king was obliged to exchange honors in a toast to his Dutch companion, his designated partner in ceremony. And yet, in this most familiar of all colonial gestures of exchange, there was a difference of vision—at least, a difference suggested by Kraton photographs from the turn of the twentieth century on. When the Pakubuwana toasted the Resident, he did so with the slightest nod (as prescribed by Kraton rules of etiquette) while gazing obliquely *past* the Dutchman, target of his compliments. Meanwhile, the Resident characteristically stared directly at the Javanese vorst as if fully enjoying the toast's rightful impact. That the same difference of vision applied even to toasts made by the Pakubuwana to a governor-general, reveals that the king's misplaced focus did not concern the specifics of rank but was aimed at a point beyond the colonial administration's reach altogether. Neither Willem nor Wilhelmina ever visited the Kraton (or, for that matter, unlike their

British counterparts, anywhere at all in their colonies), much to the consternation of many Surakartans. Had they done so, there might have been a true meeting of monarchs, a mutual glance over a glass of Madeira.

In their absence, Kangjeng Gupermèn maintained an eerie power of almost infinite abstraction upon whose behalf the Resident (and occasionally the governor-general, visiting Surakarta) would act when encountering a Pakubuwana. It was the public, face-to-face nature of such encounters—particularly when they occurred within the Kraton in full view of the assembled courtiers, royal family, Dutch dignitaries, and other members of Surakarta's elite, as most often was the case—that made the relationship between the Pakubuwana and Resident so tender, so very easily bruised. While customary exchanges, such as mutual toasts, cushioned this relationship with a display of reciprocity, they simultaneously recalled the very conditions that appeared to make such displays necessary. Kangjeng Gupermèn seemed always to demand something more; there was, perhaps, another side to these exchanges, another meaning that went, along with the Pakubuwana's glance, right past the Resident.

Behind the Invisible Line

At no time in the Kraton's ritual schedule was the relationship between the Pakubuwana and Resident more self-consciously displayed than during the annual assemblies of the Surakarta realm known as Garebeg, "to surround and escort," in this case, a king. This was particularly true for Garebeg Mulud, the assembly held in the Javanese month of Mulud in honor of the Prophet Muhammad's birth. Although palace chronicles report that Garebeg Mulud (along with its week-long carnivalesque festival known as Sekatèn) was first conceived by a devoutly Islamic king of Java's sixteenth-century Demak empire as an inspired stratagem for inducing Javanese to embrace Islam, under Surakarta's nineteenth-century rulers the annual celebration was chiefly a show of Kraton authority. It was a vividly geopolitical time when palace affiliated overlords, each with his own colors and banners of status, dutifully traveled to Surakarta for a ceremonial mapping of the realm. Royal offerings of food (several dozen so-called *gunungan,* "mountainous" mounds of rice and symbolic sundries) were torn apart and carted off by commoners fortunate enough to force their way through the crowds to this empowered booty. Thus

disseminated, the offerings were said to represent the Pakubuwana's official contribution toward a fertile "land of Java." Palace courtiers and overlords received, in turn, promotions and blessings. The observance of Mulud in Surakarta thus was far more royal than its purported creator seems to have intended.

Garebeg Mulud provided the Kraton with an answer, perhaps, to the Loji's King's Fest birthday parties. Mulud was a birthday celebration that appeared to *demand* the Resident's presence; it was as if the Dutch official, in spite of his obviously non-Islamic nature and often religiously anti-Islamic sentiments, had no choice but to attend. His customary strategy was essentially the same as that which guided Pakubuwanas for the King's Fest: arrive with an air of authority so serious that it at least equaled if not surpassed the celebrated solemnity of the occasion itself. Although such appearances were not difficult for the Resident—indeed, they were his forte as the English visitor witnessed during a classic "funeral pace" Loji-to-Kraton procession—Garebeg Mulud brought him face-to-face with a Pakubuwana in full form at the height of His Majesty's ceremonial cycle.

A late 1840s palace manuscript titled "An Explication [Pratélan] of the Appearance of His Majesty His Highness the Susuhunan Pakubuwana VII for Garebeg Mulud in the Year 1847," reveals how thoroughly routine the annual celebration had become by the midnineteenth century and how completely scripted the appearances of both His Majesty and Mister Resident had become as well.[39] That the main scenes recorded in "An Explication" appear in older Surakarta chronicles attests to the enduring significance attributed this ceremony. In 1824, the official colonial translator J. W. Winter had described (with a chilling sense of accuracy that only a *translateur* could achieve) the Mulud festival as the Kraton's "principal annual celebration."[40] "An Explication"'s Garebeg Mulud of 1847 is so similar to that detailed in Winter's account, it would seem that absolutely nothing had changed in the intervening quarter-century—no Java War, no exiled Pakubuwana VI—except, perhaps, an inflated cannon salute here and there.

Moving with its own textually wrought funeral-pace deliberateness through a list of thirty-one items (*bab*), "An Explication" inscribes each

[39] Reksadipura, *Pratélan Miyos Dalem Ingkang Sinuhun Kangjeng Susuhunan Pakubuwana VII Kaprabon Garebeg Mulud ing Taun Dal 1775* (composed and inscribed Surakarta, 1847/8). Ms. RP H42; SMP MN 271C.

[40] J. W. Winter, "Beknopte Beschrijving van het Hof Soerakarta in 1824," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 54 (1902): 61–64.

item, in model detail, as a ceremonial moment. What connects these items in this 1840s manuscript is clock time. For example:

> Item 17
> At ten o'clock, His Majesty His Highness the Susuhunan [Pakubuwana VII] emerges, proceeds out to the Central Pavilion, and with ceremony takes his seat on the throne facing north. The throne cushion is of red velvet edged with fringe, His Majesty's attire [item 17 then continues with a lengthy listing of the component parts of the king's costume, concluding with the regalia]. . . . The women servants bearing His Majesty's emblems of Kingship take their places according to custom, as in the past.[41]

Although the text seems to record events as they happened, diachronically, on Mulud 12, A.J. 1775 (A.D. 1847), it is actually impossible to tell whether the manuscript was written just after, during, or before the events it inscribes. At no point is a ceremonial mishap recorded—a tell-tale sneeze, for example—which might historically situate the document. The 1847 account remains temporally suspended in a prescriptive present and may be read either as a report modeled on the 1847 ceremony or a model for Garebeg ceremonies sometime in the future.

Diachronic ordering here is geared not so much for recording, although it certainly performs that way in the text, as it is for coordinating an absolutely crucial ceremonial synchronization with the grandfather of all clock-time in Surakarta, Dutch Loji time. By "Ten-thirty"—"Item 19"—the Resident and entourage know to arrive at the palace gates where appropriate musical salutations stand already prepared. After descending from his carriage and making his way through welcoming rites, Mister Resident emerges in the Kraton's inner courtyard with his prestigious golden parasol, heading straight for the Central Pavilion. "Item 19" continues: "As His Highness Mister Resident reaches the edge of the Central Pavilion, His Majesty His Highness the Susuhunan [Pakubuwana VII] *stands in respect* and *then shakes hands* with His Highness Mister Resident. . . . Mister Resident *then takes his seat on His Majesty's left.*"[42] Whereupon, the two sit briefly in state.

"Item 20" finds the heavily escorted pair proceeding arm in arm out to the palace's frontal "High Ground" (Siti Inggil), the key position from which all full-blown assemblies of the realm are observed and rulers reign publicly. Here, the duo sit in state side by side once again (and so too later

[41] Reksadipura, *Pratélan Miyos Dalem,* p. 5.
[42] Ibid., p. 6.

at the Great Mosque). This ceremonial scene at the High Ground pavilion is of special interest, for it represents, from the Kraton's perspective, the very heart of Garebeg Mulud. Once all requisite courtiers, members of the royal family, Dutch officials and guests (including Prince Mangkunagara) are seated, Pakubuwana VII issues ingsun commands with imperial waves of the hand to bring out the offerings, to sound the gamelan orchestras, and so on. His orders are ceremoniously passed down a chain of command until received and immediately acted upon by the appropriate palace subordinates. Meanwhile, the Resident produces an entirely independent ceremonial counterpoint of commands by intoning his familiar series of toasts, finishing with "To Java!" His declarations are dutifully answered by cannon fire, rifle salvos, and drill bands in a chain reaction of salutes during which one burst of noise triggers the next. Each figure thus exercises authority and flexes the powers of command on his own terms and in a different language as if supremely oblivious of the other.

Almost one century later at the end of Dutch rule in the Indies, the same scene was still reenacted annually. "Sekatèn Illumined" (*Soeloeh Sekatèn*), an explanatory 1940 Garebeg Mulud program guidebook published for general consumption at what had become an extensive commercial night fair similar to that described at the outset of Chapter 1, revealed for its audience the continued significance of this aging "custom." The guidebook includes an eerily perceptive comment just as Pakubuwana XI (r. 1939–45) first enters the Central Pavilion to begin his half-hour or so wait for the Resident (by now promoted to "Mister Governor"): "His Majesty . . . takes his place on the throne positioned just to the east of the seat prepared for the Mister Governor. An invisible line divides the pavilion into two parts, forming a boundary between His Majesty and the Mister Governor."[43] Once the Dutch official is seated next to the Pakubuwana, the immobile pair of authorities exhibit a remarkable detachment as if even the invisible line itself did not exist. The overall effect is that of a pair of "kings" set up side by side, both staring dead ahead in nearly parallel vision, permanently suspended in ritual stalemate.

Underlying this virtual suspension of sovereignty was a deeper logic that directed all official entrances by the Resident, from the early nineteenth century on, into Kraton ceremonial affairs. For Kraton occasions that did *not* demand (or merit, depending on perspective) the Resident's

[43] *Soeloeh Sekatèn* [compiled by "Chronos, Free-lance journalist Indonesier"] (Solo: B. T. Tjioe, 1940), p. 15.

attendance—monthly ceremonies observing a Pakubuwana's cosmological age, for example—courtiers, guests, and palace retainers assembled in preparation and awaited His Majesty's customary appearance. Only after all had assembled did the Pakubuwana then make His formal entrance, accompanied by proper gamelan salutations. For the many Kraton occasions that did involve a Resident, however, entrances and appearances were altered significantly. Such events found the Pakubuwana *already* in position on his throne in the Central Pavilion, sitting quietly while awaiting the Resident's arrival. When the Dutch official at last emerged with his entourage and golden parasol and entered the inner courtyard (as described in "Item 19"), the Javanese king rose and moved to greet his companion near the edge of the pavilion. After a brief handshake, the pair walked at a gentle pace, arm in arm, back to the pavilion's interior where they were straightway seated next to one another for the duration of the event. Following the same choreographic logic a conventional Javanese wedding panggih employs for creating connubial bonds—that is, precisely the logic of "meeting" that Kraton weddings involving the Pakubuwana as groom strategically *avoided,* as noted in the wedding of Pakubuwana IX—the ritual encounter on the Central Pavilion's threshold implicitly altered His Majesty, transforming him into a colonial bride, a veiled match for the Mister Resident.[44]

Despite the uncanny parallelism between the special welcome habitually prepared by a Pakubuwana for Residents and conventional panggih rites, His Majesty certainly never intended to perform as a bride. The encounter was never explicitly conceptualized in terms of a wedding proper. From the Kraton Surakarta's earliest years when Huprups first appeared at the palace door as if extending an inviting arm of alliance and complicity, Dutch hands had reached further and further into the palace's innermost affairs. The customary welcome that awaited colonial Residents following in the Huprups' steps thus constituted a somewhat natural move on the Kraton's part to contain and incorporate the foreign intruder. (This was a move that came, of course, at the very moment when the citadel appeared to have been breached.) Such a welcome—epitomized by the handshake so gingerly exchanged between Pakubuwanas and Residents—provided just the basis that would make possible, for well over one century, the maintenance of an "invisible line" drawn straight through the very ominous conjunction of difference represented by Kangjeng Gupermèn. For the Pakubuwana and Resident *first* had to

[44] In *Soeloeh Sekatèn,* the moment at which the Pakubuwana and Resident meet is expanded to three bows and a handshake.

Fig. 4. Pakubuwana X takes the arm of Governor J. J. van Helsdingen in procession from the Kraton Surakarta, celebrating Queen Wilhelmina's fiftieth birthday, August 31, 1930. Gusti Kangjeng Ratu Mas (queen of Pakubuwana X) likewise takes the arm of a commanding colonial official. Courtesy the Mangkunagaran Palace.

be brought together, face to face, in order then to ignore one another effectively while sitting ceremoniously in state. Thus, while the nineteenth-century royal wedding developed into a logical textual subject and ceremonial image investing Surakarta rulers with an aura of "Javanese" authority, the old logic of conventional panggih rites worked behind the scenes to reserve for these rulers of "Java" a front row seat, right next to the official representative of the Kangjeng Gupermèn. The careers of "Java"'s ideally projected groom-king and colonially fashioned drag king were thoroughly dependent on one another: they reflected the pursuits of mirror-opposite figures who were necessarily represented, of course, by one and the same person.

3

Prophetic Conclusions

Surakarta in Late Colonial Times

The advent of the twentieth century, with all its turn-of-the-century rhetorical weight, customarily provides historians with a timely marker whose stress upon external forces of transformation is similar to that suggested by 1830 (and the advent of the cultivation system), although notably heightened. For what appears to emerge with the twentieth century is nothing less than a new age, an age of extraordinarily rapid importation of technologies and terminologies. These technologies facilitated the appearance of many of the features attributed to modernity, including, in fact, the Indonesian language's own term for "modern," borrowed from the Dutch *modern*. Yet, just as 1830 also represented, as argued in Chapter 2, a significant point in a process of domestication not imposed from without but cultivated through "Java," from *within*, so, too, the modern age reflected, with novel effect, a discourse of remarkably internal dimensions.

Playing on the paradoxes inherent in the early twentieth-century formation of an Indonesian modern national identity, Benedict Anderson quotes a recollection of the prominent Indonesian nationalist figure Dr. Soetomo. The quotation is drawn from young Soetomo's experience as a student in a Westernized classroom when he suddenly discovered, as he recalled, " 'I too could work without copying (*nurun*) and thereby came

the awareness [*kesadaran*] that working by copying is work in degradation'."[1] "'Without copying' in the Dutch classroom means," Anderson notes, "'copying' Dutch culture, in other words, absorbing its values seriously; this however, implies not imitating Javanese tradition, which extols imitation. But [it] also foreshadows the nationalist solution—imitating one's forefathers by not imitating them. Being a good Javanese by becoming a good Indonesian."[2] Or perhaps, too, somewhat more obliquely in light of the patently unnationalistic nature of the materials that follow in this chapter, by *not* being a good "Javanese." For the nationalist solution, as Anderson understandably argues, depended upon moving *across* languages, to Dutch and revolutionary Malay and, thus, into a critical distance from which "Java" might appear a world past. But what of writings in Javanese that were not directly motivated by this cross-lingual move? What, in particular, was the fate of "Java" in the palace archives?

This question is complicated by yet another cross-lingual force increasingly at work on "Java": Javanology (*Javanologie*), the tradition of translation and analysis, *in Dutch* (by indigenes and foreigners alike), of matters "Javanese" or, more precisely, "Javaansch." Growing out of language-training programs for Dutch administrators, projects for Bible translation and dictionary compilation, and similar typically colonial early nineteenth-century endeavors, by the end of the nineteenth century and with the aid of print technology this force was producing in the Indies a published archive that included editions of "native" histories and literature; analyses of grammar, language usage, and etiquette; commentaries on social life; guides to "folk" performances and beliefs; and other documentary evidence for much that "Java" might represent. By December 1919, the Java Instituut would be founded in Surakarta with its *Djåwå* ("Java," the Institute's journal, Javanology's official organ) published from 1921 right up to 1941. Writing on the development of Javanology in the Indies, Kenji Tsuchiya suggests that "the *modérn* age of the twentieth century emerged as the result of a period during which Dutch infiltrated the Javanese language."[3] Again, it is as if the sense of distancing and disjunction that accompanies the advent of modernity arises

[1] Benedict R. O'Gorman Anderson, "A Time of Darkness and a Time of Light: Transposition in Early Indonesian Nationalist Thought," in *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990), p. 261.

[2] Ibid., p. 262.

[3] Kenji Tsuchiya, "Javanology and the Age of Ranggawarsita: An Introduction to Nineteenth-Century Javanese Culture," in *Reading Southeast Asia* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1990), p. 78.

primarily across a linguistic gap. The Javanological process of enframing, although "participated in" by the Javanese (as Tsuchiya puts it), was essentially a *Dutch* project, a project initiated from without and whose essentially foreign, Orientalist logic was gradually imitated by the Javanese themselves.

Although this direct importation of Dutch scholarly concerns no doubt thoroughly shaped the narrow field of formal Javanology, palace manuscripts from the mideighteenth century on disclose, as we have seen, a very different, relatively broader project—or series of projections, really—through which an idealized "Java" became increasingly desirable and imaginable, *in Javanese.* By the time "The Giyanti History" (our mideighteenth-century text of departure) was edited by Javanologists for publication and dissemination in 1874, its "Javanese" world of ceremonial orderliness had long been established as a site of origins whose aura of authenticity eventually attracted professional Javanologists. There was, thus, a distinctly late nineteenth-century convergence of interests in the figure of "Java." The model world bequeathed in palace texts such as Mangkunagara IV's "Exemplary Wisdom" or reenacted in palace ceremonies such as Garebeg Mulud appeared as evidence of a grand "Javanese" heritage that seemed to *demand* Javanologists' analytical skills. The "Java" of Javanology's disciplinary gaze had already been constructed in just the fashion that would render it naturally recognizable as an object of cross-cultural, cross-lingual desire. That is, the subject of "Java" retraced here through palace manuscripts (of the late eighteenth century on), seems to have anticipated—to have predated and, perhaps, looked forward to—formal Javanological attention. Thus, although "Java" was very much a working construct of modern Javanological discourse (as Tsuchiya demonstrates), it nevertheless foreshadowed that work by supplying Javanologists a subject ideally fit for analysis, a subject *already* constituted discursively in Javanese. In short, "Java" was a subject that seemed, in effect, to beg for translation.

But this is not all that the "Java" inscribed in palace manuscripts foreshadowed. Implicit within the figure of "Java" was the possibility that the contradictions of that figure's own creation would eventually play themselves out, that along with the profound transformations in the Indies from the late nineteenth century on, the "Java" represented by the Kraton Surakarta might also, on its own accord, undergo an equivalent transformation, even if this transformation would be its last. From this intensely internal perspective, such a possibility appeared less in the form of an emerging new age than as the prophetic end to a "Java" soon to pass. Perhaps it was no longer preferable to perform as good "Javanese."

To begin to read the contours of this contrary logic at work within "Java" I return to a supplementary significance inscribed within the 1860s Kraton Surakarta manuscript recording the wedding of Pakubuwana IX.

"Java" Doubles

In "The History of His Highness Pakubuwana IX's Wedding" much textual attention is devoted, as noted earlier, to the fine details of ceremonial choreography and protocol informing the 1865 event it inscribed. Here, the groom-king appears to reign supreme as the authority of "Java" displays its customary spectacle of order, a spectacle drawing crowds of onlookers—low-ranking courtiers, palace guards, and court servants with their families—into the central courtyard. The presence of the spectators within this chronicle is, in fact, so strong that at times it seems to threaten the very structure of order upon which this text dwells. At one point, for example, spectators suddenly surge forward—and with them the focus of the text—struggling with each other in an effort to behold the groom-king, only to be driven back by palace guards; in the confusion an infant is trampled to death. This does not really distract spectators but instead attests to—proclaims the text, now completely engrossed in the energies of the crowd rather than the stateliness of His Majesty—the intensity of the crowd's desire. Later, even the palace guards fight among themselves (or, in Javanese, *rebut*) for good vantage. Meanwhile, the Pakubuwana sits motionlessly in state, regalia bearers squat in line behind, Dutch ladies remain poised sipping tea, and delicate palace bedhaya dancers ready themselves for performance. Textually juxtaposed in "Pakubuwana IX's Wedding" are two visions of Kraton ceremony that, while undoubtedly supplementary, are at certain odds with one another.

Perhaps the most astonishing interruption in the scene of order within the Kraton's central courtyard comes with the palace *édan[an]*, the "crazies," a startling group of court servants, including dwarves and others similarly endowed with what could be thought of as metaphysiques. These were profound jesters whose relatively unnatural looks and behavior were taken by Surakartans to embody supernatural forces that belonged, naturally enough, in the Kraton. The text:

> The crazies loved a good laugh,
> free was the mood as they entered

from the cookery into the courtyard
prancing to and fro like horses,
some shouldering a penis [*dakar*]
the size of a man's calf, painted

black, the head reddened,
outrageously beating about.
Delighted were those who looked on,
the court women
scattering, not wishing to be dizzied
by a form so great.[4]

The crazies had long been essential figures in entourages of Javanese rulers and were listed, along with palace heirlooms, regalia, and other manifestations of royal power, in Surakarta chronicles that recorded processions of state. Never, however, were their antics really spotlighted in earlier chronicles, not with the flair produced in this 1865 manuscript. Ceremonial scenes like the royal wedding first had to be conceived as a self-contained event, a discrete textual subject demanding a manuscript all its own, for such familiar follies to find space for, and deserve, inscription.

When the crazies suddenly burst into "Pakubuwana IX's Wedding" and take over, they appear to disrupt what had become by the 1860s a relatively routine representation of order. This textual appearance of the crazies nevertheless suggests, at the same time, the possibility of their own domestication; their behavior could now be bracketed as disorderly enough to provide an amusing contrast to ceremonial order. The sense of "Javanese" order now ran deep enough not only safely to allow the crazies' intrusion but to *need* it. As monstrous wooden phalluses flailed about the palace courtyard on Pakubuwana IX's wedding day, "delighted were those who looked on." Yet in "Pakubuwana IX's Wedding," these characters shouldering "a form so great" do not seem to know when to stop—when enough disorder is enough—and textually exceed the brackets that would contain them. Just moments after the crazies are ordered off the scene by the Pakubuwana, the chronicle follows their action elsewhere rather than returning its focus to His Highness. Our attention is riveted once more on the painted phalluses, now referred to in the crudest of terms for the male organ (*gathèlan*). (It was just at this point that my 1980s Javanese language tutor—the late Mr.

[4] Atmadikara, *Babad Krama-dalem,* p. 52 verso.

Suranto, a Surakartan who was truly delighted by this text's detailed account of late nineteenth-century Kraton protocol although clearly disillusioned when the phalluses first appeared—groaned audibly, "Oooh no, here they come again.") Lingering at length on scenes of excessive contest (rebutan) and folly (édanan), "Pakubuwana IX's Wedding" exaggerates precisely those moments in Kraton customary affairs that appeared most peripheral to 1860s Surakarta conventions of order and, consequently, most identifiably Kraton. For beyond this palace's significance as *the* central model of cultural order, as "Java"'s virtual epicenter, the Kraton Surakarta's own eccentricity would prove its most attractive quality.

The sense of eccentricity that surfaces so dramatically in "Pakubuwana IX's Wedding" reflected the Kraton Surakarta's increasing predilection for diversionary pastimes and pleasures (*langen*) that obviously did not fit a model "Java" of the sort epitomized by Mangkunagara IV's devotional "Wedding Celebration." "The History of Langenharja," a massive Kraton chronicle taking its title from Pakubuwana IX's newly constructed 1870s pleasure retreat ("Langenharja," from *langen*, "pleasure"; *harja*, "flourishing") built on the outskirts of Surakarta, lingers at length on the numerous attractions and diversions offered the king at this site during 1871–77.[5] Ceremonial ram fights in which the defeated beast was given wholly unorthodox Islamic burial rites, recitations of stately Javanese verse (*sekar ageng*) punctuated with a shot of whiskey at the end of each stanza in the everyday style of a drunken social dance (*tayuban*), and other similarly eccentric pleasures (by late nineteenth-century Surakarta standards) were served up at the retreat. And, it was in a bedroom in Langenharja's innermost chambers (rather than on the distant southern seashore) that Pakubuwana IX resumed, almost anachronistically, the royal quest for an infusion of power by rendezvousing regularly with the spirit goddess Ratu Kidul, the very Queen of the South who had been sought in 1830 by his father, Pakubuwana VI, just before his exile. Eccentricity is certainly the perogative, conceivably the hallmark, of a king. With Pakubuwana IX, this aspect of kingship became exaggerated as if in response to a late nineteenth-century sense of the limitations enframing "Java."

Assuming the outlandish forms that it did, the Kraton's relatively peculiar pursuit of pleasures no doubt was a cause for both confidence and distress in Surakarta's rival palace, the Mangkunagaran; the stranger the

[5] See *Babad Langenharja*, vols. 2–8, 11–17, 19, and 21–30 (composed Surakarta, 1871–77; inscribed Surakarta 1871–77). Mss. SP 253 Ha, 187 Ra, 390–391 Ha, 262 Ha, 313 Ha, 294 Ha, 241 Ra, 29 Ha, 295–297 Ha, 392 Ra; SMP KS 87–99.

Kraton became, the more antiquated and out of fashion (*kuna*), and at the same time, uniquely endowed, even empowered, the Kraton appeared. Accounts of foreign visitors to Surakarta in the late nineteenth century invariably contrasted the graciousness of the Mangkunagara with the strange rudeness of the Pakubuwana. Such accounts are of interest here because they do not dismiss *all* Javanese behavior as, say, impudent by nature but instead single out Kraton conduct as uniquely suspect. In 1889, for example, a British merchant touring the "East," one Arthur Earle, visited both palaces, stopping first at the Kraton where he accompanied Surakarta's Assistant Resident in the delivery of a letter to Pakubuwana IX. From Earle's daily log one reads:

> The Emperor bowed to us, and to show how little he considered us, at once, (as is his custom) spat into a large high gold spittoon, on handsome silver legs, which stood beside him!! He then had the letter in its yellow shroudings handed to him, and taking out a large silk pocket handkerchief, searched for his penknife to open the missive with. . . . He at last found the penknife—the silence was profound—the letter was opened and conned over, pronounced to be of a satisfactory nature.[6]

Earle went on to visit Pakubuwana IX's pleasure retreat:

> In the afternoon we drove to see the Emperor's summer house at Langenardjo. It is some six miles distant, on the banks of the river. His Dutch guard follows him here. A more grotesque looking place I never saw. It contains a large collection of European rubbish, and the gardens are full of fountains, ornamented by numberless China dolls and animals.[7]

What the British visitor had initially suspected—echoing the opinion of the Dutch Resident, Earle's host and prime source of information—appeared true: this king had "the character of being the most impudent barbarian ruler in existence."[8]

That evening Earle visited the palace of Mangkunagara V where an immediately recognizable world of high cultural difference awaited him:

> Here we were courteously received by "His Highness," who was the very opposite of the Magnate who had given us the opportunity of seeing his truly Native Court in the morning. . . .

[6] Earle, "Month in Java in 1889," p. 34.
[7] Ibid., p. 36.
[8] Ibid., p. 32.

> We mounted the audience chamber, and after tea had been served, went to a large gilded open platform with a white marble floor, used for ceremonies. On the magnificent gamelang [*sic*] (of some hundred performers) striking up, two men (professional dancers) at once emerged from the back, dressed in the most magnificent costumes I ever beheld. The value of these dresses is very great, and no one possesses such a fine collection as the Prince. He has sent several splendid costume specimens to the Java Court at the Paris Exhibition, and has arranged after that is closed, to present them to one of the museums in the French capital. . . . The scene was, as one of the gentlemen who accompanied us said, more akin to those depicted in the "Arabian Nights," than anything one could well imagine.[9]

In contrast to the truly disorienting otherness of Pakubuwana IX's world—"a more grotesque looking place I never saw"—the Mangkunagaran Palace graciously provided Earle with the "very opposite," an "Arabian Nights" evening, a representation of Other so classic for those late nineteenth-century travelers who believed they were touring the Orient, that it had been admitted to the Java Court of the Paris Exhibition. From the late eighteenth century on, the figure of "Java" had expanded discursively as if in anticipation of precisely this sort of international recognition. While the 1870s Kraton partially distanced itself—quite literally, in the case of Langenharja—from such a figure, Mangkunagaran exhibitionism would, by contrast, present "Java" up front for full cultural approval. In Mangkunagara V's palace, even the gamelan orchestra sounded "magnificent" to Earle. Only hours earlier in the Kraton, essentially the same sounds had confronted him with a "monotonous wail."

The nascent cultural legacy of Mangkunagara IV and son and the retreating Kraton cosmos of Pakubuwana IX thus reflected two recognizably different yet thoroughly interdependent late nineteenth-century figures of "Java." One "Java," laced with moralistic style, ceremonial sincerity, and an exhibitionlike devotion to customs and manners, was fit for emulation and reproduction. The religion of the sublime in "Exemplary Wisdom" and the liturgical wedding in "Wedding Celebration" represented a newly modeled order suitable for replication among the widening ranks of *priyayi*—aristocrats, administrators, and privileged civil servants—in search of an indigenous aristocratic (*priyayèn*) style and a truly "Javanese" cultural life.[10] The other "Java"—cloaked in ritual

[9] Ibid., pp. 37–38.

[10] For an analysis of the social and political role of the priyayi elite in colonial Java, see Sutherland, *Making of a Bureaucratic Elite,* passim.

uniqueness, inhabited by metaphysical dwarfs wielding phallic clubs, and motivated by a recluse's pleasure in eccentricities and other-worldliness—was imagined to lie beyond the new model order, outside everyday aristocratic assumptions. Unlike Mangkunagara IV's exemplary lessons, "Pakubuwana IX's Wedding" and "The History of Langenharja" inscribed a world so perfectly unsuitable for replication that it appeared beyond all administrative reach.

Since the Mangkunagaran's formal establishment by the Dutch in 1757 as a royal house, this palace had experienced a tangible insecurity concerning its junior status vis-à-vis the Kraton. It was no doubt because of this insecurity and a chronic desire to please the Dutch that the Mangkunagaran Palace performed so well as a potential legator of "Javanese" culture. No cultural artifact better illustrates the special nature of the Mangkunagaran's creative impulse, particularly Mangkunagara IV's celebrated cultural genius, than the so-called Langenharjan coat, one of modern Java's most familiar pieces of ritual attire. In 1871, just after Pakubuwana IX had completed initial construction on Langenharja, he invited Mangkunagara IV to the new retreat's opening ceremonies. Prince Mangkunagara was, however, in a quandary concerning dress: his official costume for in-house Kraton affairs was too formal for the occasion, yet even his finest unceremonial evening wear was, he feared, not respectful enough.[11] In a stroke of brilliance, the prince took scissors to his formal Dutch tails (*rokkie Walandi*), snipped off the coat's tails (giving the garment a clean cutaway back to make space for a handsome keris), put on his finest batik (rather than trousers), and made *the* fashion statement of 1870s Surakarta. In the words of Pakubuwana IX's grandchildren: "The 'rokkie' was made into Javanese fashion [*"rokkie" kadamel cara Jawi*]. All courtiers accompanying him [Mangkunagara IV] also wore Javanese tails [*rokkie Jawi*]."[12]

"Javanese" style had first appeared in the king's wardrobe in contrast to "Dutch" style, itself a product of cultural cross-dressing. In the late nineteenth century, the rokkie Jawi presented a fashionable alternative that drew on both "Dutch" and "Javanese" styles without completely collapsing the distinction between the two. Called "Langenharjan" (from the occasion of its emergence), the altered rokkie represented a style decidely not Dutch—missing tails, a keris, batik on the bottom—yet

[11] For ceremonies at the Kraton Surakarta, the Mangkunagara usually dressed in Dutch military uniform, circumventing the difficult implications of his status.

[12] *Jatno-Hisworo,* pp. 38–39. This story still circulates in Solo and usually is recalled either as evidence of Mangkunagara IV's ingenuity or as an example of the Solonese talent for "Javanizing" everything that passes through Solo.

clearly not the official costume of the Kraton. The coat became the chosen garb for turn of the twentieth-century white collar grooms aspiring, not unlike Mangkunagara IV himself, to new heights of "Javanese" prestige. In time, this indigenized rokkie would become requisite ritual attire for (what later would be called) "traditional" Central Javanese grooms, those numerous instances of cultural subjects styled to replicate "Javanese" authority. Equipped with evidence of cultural authority and devotion bound in creations such as "Exemplary Wisdom" and "Wedding Celebration" or fashioned as "Javanese tails," by the 1870s, the Mangkunagaran royal line appeared to have arrived.

In the Kraton Surakarta, however, the heights of prestige had long been achieved by the 1870s, and the enormous walls surrounding this palace appear to have finally overshadowed the ceremonial world they were thought to represent. Despite all appearances of regal grandeur won by Garebeg Mulud and similar displays of authority, Pakubuwana IX (rather like his exiled father, Pakubuwana VI) looked elsewhere, possibly beyond the walls of "Java," in search of another realm no less fantastic than that which had originated in Kraton Surakarta. Positioned marginally on the outskirts of the capital city, the Langenharja pleasure retreat stood in oblique contrast to much that Surakarta proper had come to represent by the last decades of the nineteenth century. One and one-quarter centuries following the Kraton's ritual establishment, Pakubuwana IX made a fantasy move away from Surakarta's central bastion of culture and achieved a sort of treasured marginality.

Juxtaposed to the more replicable manifestation of "Java" exhibited by the Mangkunagara's smartly tailored cultural creativity, the Kraton's "Java" would look all the more antiquated, eccentric, and inaccessible, and its imposing walls all the more formidable as they recalled a realm now increasingly hidden from view. There was thus a critical mutual exaggeration between the Kraton's "Java" of inaccessibility and the Mangkunagaran's increasingly available, more obviously exhibited representations of "Java." Emerging from these two genealogies of "Java" were the outlines of a figure eccentric yet ideally centered, extraordinarily quirky yet conventionally refined, of cultivated obscurity yet lavish in customary detail. Much of Surakarta's hold on the cultural imaginations of New Order Javanese elite may be retraced along just such outlines.

In light of the mutual exaggeration between the Kraton and Mangkunagaran palaces, it would be misleading to construe the two in mutually exclusive terms as if they occupied wholly different worlds. The two palaces shared, of course, by colonial standards of empire, that relatively small plot of privileged Central Javanese turf known as Surakarta. It was

the genealogical entwining of difference within Surakarta, between the two "Java"s exemplified by the Kraton and Mangkunagaran, that produced truly durable fabrications of "Javanese" style such as the Langenharjan coat. Just as the Mangkunagaran Palace had its own pleasure retreats and ritual kinks, the Kraton Surakarta remained the original post-Kartasura trace of cultural authenticity. Moreover, behind the ceremonial walls represented by *both* the Kraton and Mangkunagaran lay the sense of a hidden "Java"—expressed in Mangkunagara IV's invocation of the religion of the sublime and Pakubuwana IX's invocation of the spirit queen of the South Ocean—a realm ideally removed from the conventions and constraints of everyday Surakarta life.

This late nineteenth-century desire for a hidden "Java" disclosed a redoubled vision of the realm ritually displaced in 1745. From the mideighteenth-century contradiction of the Kraton Surakarta's creation had emerged a "Java" devoted as much to reserving for itself a focus elsewhere, that is, to perpetual self-displacement, as to presenting itself front-and-center for cultural recognition. The motives behind the two 1870s visions of "Java"—one largely centered in the Kraton and headed for cultural eccentricity, the other coming out of the Mangkunagaran and increasingly devoted to cultural centrism—thus were historically crossed. Both visions were spiritually retreating, vis-à-vis the Dutch, into the singular "Javanese" world that colonial Surakarta came to represent by the close of the nineteenth century.[13]

The Figure of Displacement

Surakartans today remember Pakubuwana X (r. 1893–1939) as the greatest of all Pakubuwanas. This distinction is, in part, because he is the only 100 percent colonial-era Pakubuwana lodged in the memories of Surakarta's current elders, including those who served in this ruler's ceremonially active palace. (Pakubuwana XI [r. 1939–45] would soon bow in humiliating submission to Japanese occupation officials in 1942, and his son Pakubuwana XII [r. 1945–] would, as a teenage king, fumble into diplomatic disaster during the Indonesian revolution just a few years later.) Pakubuwana X is remembered, in fact, as the last Surakarta king

[13] The Kraton Surakarta and Mangkunagaran continue to represent for Javanese elite residing in Jakarta two overlapping though distinctly different forms of "Javanese" culture believed embodied in Surakarta palaces. While the Mangkunagaran maintains its role as a sort of country club of high arts and culture, the walls surrounding the Kraton represent as forcibly as ever something ideally hidden, therefore, the one thing most desirable.

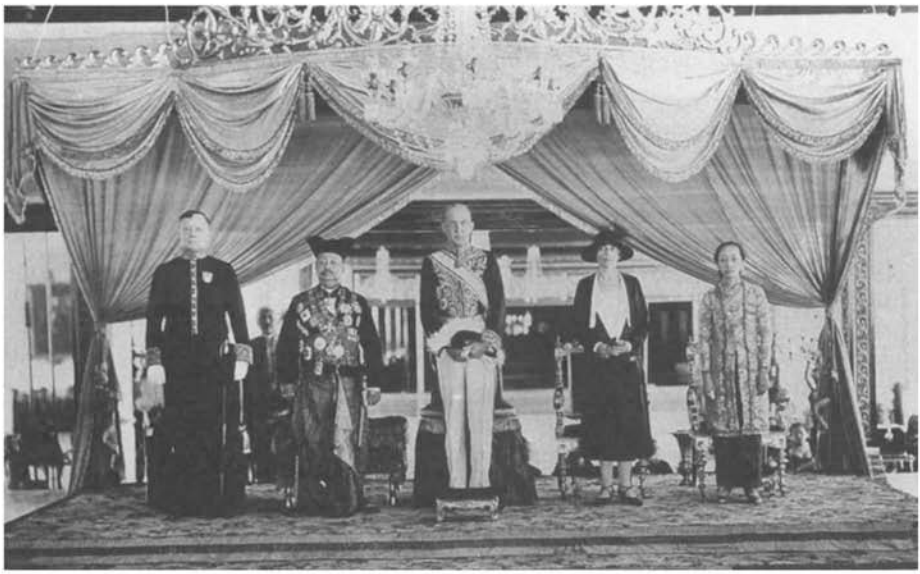

Fig. 5. The visit of Governor-General A. C. D. de Graeff to the Kraton Surakarta on May 21, 1928. Left to right: M. B. van der Jagt, governor of Surakarta; Pakubuwana X; Governor-General de Graeff; Mrs. de Graeff; Gusti Kangjeng Ratu Mas (queen of Pakubuwana X). Courtesy the Mangkunagaran Palace.

endowed with a truly regal aura. Thus the Pakubuwana most memorable to contemporary Surakartans turns out also to have been the last "true" Pakubuwana and, therefore, from a Surakartan perspective, the last true Javanese king. Beyond the inherently cynical view such a memory bequeaths many older Surakartans confronted with New Order revivals of imperial customs, the most remarkable feature about the "last true king" story is that it already circulated in Surakarta *during* Pakubuwana X's reign. It was known well before his death in 1939, the arrival of the Japanese in 1942, and the ensuing revolutionary years determined to leave the Kraton Surakarta far behind as a sign of the "feudal" (*féodal*) past. Pakubuwana X, thus, not only became, in the most literal sense, a legend in his own time but apparently was fated to do so.

The long reign of this king spanned extraordinary changes in East Indies politics and in everyday Surakarta life: the rise of Indonesian nationalist movements and political parties that challenged the Dutch colonial government and the Javanese vorsten supported by the government; developments in transportation, communications, and economy that rapidly stretched the Surakarta awareness of an international world that certainly was not centered in Surakarta, much less represented by the

Kraton's Axis of the Cosmos. Yet, the longer Pakubuwana X simply survived in such a world (he lived to the age of seventy-two although by thirty-three in 1899 his health was considered poor because of intemperance)[14] the more perceptible his kingly aura seems to have become for the several generations of Surakartans who came of age during his reign. Confirming Pakubuwana X's accumulating aura was His Highness's celebrated physique: a great ballooning figure that over the years expanded as if to accommodate ever-greater numbers of honorary medals from abroad. This blimplike shape invested this king with a look of special grandeur given Surakarta's history of relatively slight monarchs. (Kraton servants charged with preparing offerings in the 1980s still contended with Pakubuwana X's full figure: "The offering for his tomb is by far the most complete [lengkap] of offerings made for kings. He ate everything.")[15] Pakubuwana X thus lived as if to embody the culmination of Pakubuwanan history, but he did so as an extended reminder that a grand transformation was in process, that a world was passing by.

Against the late nineteenth-century Central Javanese landscape, nothing passed by faster or with more audible force than railway trains. In 1866 (the same year that Pakubuwana IX's luminescent bride bore the future Pakubuwana X) Pakubuwana IX looked on ceremoniously as the governor-general dedicated the cornerstone of Surakarta's first train station. With permission to construct on Kraton territories, the Netherlands Indies Railway Company would soon transform the focal city of the Surakarta cosmos into a modern connection point, a routine stopover between the north coast port of Semarang and the city of Yogyakarta, Surakarta's cosmic competitor just an easy morning's ride to the southwest. Having grown up along with the railway system, by the turn of the century Pakubuwana X was very much accustomed to a formal in-state sit of fifteen minutes or so in the depot's *wachtkamer* while awaiting official arrivals and royal departures.

It must have seemed unusually normal then that "A Royal Pairing" (*Sri Karongron*), the multivolume chronicle that recorded the events of Pakubuwana X's palace between 1912 and 1916, especially events anticipating the wedding of Pakubuwana X to a daughter of Hamengkubuwana VII, ruler of the Kraton Yogyakarta (hence, the chronicle's title), should treat its royal audience scene opening in the following fashion. The text:

[14] George D. Larson, *Prelude to Revolution: Palaces and Politics in Surakarta, 1912–1942* (Leiden: KITLV, 1987), p. 30.

[15] Special among the many offerings still prepared in memory of this king are Dutch pastries.

Pleasantly did the King summon:
"Dear brother Prabuningrat, is it already time
now for us to leave?"

The one addressed replied calmly:
"Most humbly, it is at present
twenty-five minutes after the hour of seven."
"Dear brother, is that pocketwatch of yours
the same as the Loji's clock?"
The courtier answered:
"Most humbly, in complete agreement;
this watch of mine
has been matched with the Loji clock,
there is no difference—to the minute."

His Majesty spoke once more,
"It is advisable then in a little while
just about half past seven
to leave for the train."
The one addressed responded: "Indeed."[16]

At 7:49 the train pulls up and Pakubuwana X boards his extra (*ekstra*) coach, a specially appointed car decorated with the Netherlands tricolors. Within minutes the train is on its way to Yogyakarta, regularly ticking off Central Javanese towns en route. Several hours later, after a formal check-in with the Resident of Yogyakarta, Pakubuwana X arrives at Hamengkubuwana VII's palace. Once all dignitaries and courtiers are properly seated, the Yogyakarta monarch turns to his future son-in-law with this inquiry:

"My regal son, what
time was it when you departed
from your palace?"
The Surakarta King replied softly:

"My regal father, I departed
from the palace

[16] R. Ng. Purbadipura, *Sri Karongron* (composed Surakarta 1912–16; inscribed Surakarta 1916). Ms. SP 190 Ca; SMP KS 140, pp. 8–9. Although *Sri Karongron* was composed in anticipation of the wedding between Pakubuwana X and a daughter of Hamengkubuwana VII, it was concerned more with everyday Pakubuwanan life.

at half past seven,
my procession took approximately
twenty minutes, arriving
at [Surakarta's] Balapan Station
I sat briefly
then boarded the train and at
six minutes after the hour of eight the coach began to move."[17]

Since the early decades of Pakubuwana VII's reign, Kraton Surakarta ceremony had been precisely synchronized, as noted earlier, with Loji clock time. The Indies train time of Pakubuwana X's days reflected, however, a synchronization that drew local worlds, including that of the Pakubuwana, into a far grander system of movement. The trains themselves were perceived as great, booming machines of momentum, freighted signs of an irreversible forward advancement or *kemadjoean* (progress). This extremely open-ended Malay term was variously read in early twentieth-century Java as economic progress, social advancement, and/or political movement. Regardless of the conflicting motives built into these and other formulations of progressiveness, all readings rode on the tangible sense of a new era in motion.

Surrounded by signs of such progress, the Kraton translated *kemadjoean* into High Javanese as *kamajengan* (a term already endowed with Javanese literary resonances of military strategy, or troops' advancement) and claimed a string of victories. Pakubuwana X authorized, for example, the construction of innumerable towering white gates for remapping the realm, each gate plastered with the palace's official seal; a school for children of the Pakubuwana's highly extended family; an amusement park and museum; a hospital with apothecary; and factories for processing Pakubuwanan sugar, tapioca, and tobacco. His Highness also oversaw advances in palace décor (electric lights and potted plants installed), officiated at opening ceremonies (bridge dedications), sponsored services (loan programs) and groups such as the Pakubuwana Padplindér (Pathfinder Boy Scouts), and even opened "His Majesty's Home for the Poor" (Kagungan Dalem Griyo Miskin), an unprecedented juxtaposition of terms with oxymoronic overtones of royal impoverishment. All of this neatly coalesced, of course, with the demands of the colonial regime's newly instituted Ethical policy, which, in what now might be recognized as classic Foucaultian form, promised disciplined productivity through education, health clinics, welfare programs, and similar social services.

[17] Ibid., p. 62.

In much the same style that nineteenth-century Pakubuwanas had turned the demands of Kangjeng Gupermèn to their partial advantage by sitting in state as if supremely oblivious of the invisible line flanking them, or, earlier, by incorporating "Dutch fashion" into what would emerge as an essentially "Javanese" style, Pakubuwana X thus converted Ethical demands into personalized victories. This sort of conversion was, however, increasingly precarious because of the speed with which such demands were arising on all sides of the Kraton. Attention to protocol redoubled as the Kraton accommodated growing numbers of guests unaccustomed to the fine points of palace etiquette. Under the heading "Kamajengan," lists of recent advances in Kraton affairs appeared regularly in Surakarta periodicals; that these lists were routinely prefaced by an update on the current number of Pakubuwana X's offspring indicates just how personally the idea of advancement itself was perceived within palace walls. Thus, for example, in 1929 in honor of His Majesty's sixty-fourth birthday—forty-five children, seventy grandchildren "as of today"—a Java Institute publication cited, among others, the following new advances for Pakubuwana X:

> (1) Distributed chair privileges to high-ranking courtiers who had not yet received them.
> (2) Sped up *tedhak* [royal tour] travel by using an automobile [*otomobil*].
> (3) Gave participants in the teachers' association congress and Yong Yapa [*sic*], the right to enter the Kraton attired in Javanese whites [*cara Jawi pethak*].[18]

All such advances disclosed a sense of urgency concerning the conventions of protocol. The first responded to the ever-widening ranks of souls deserving chairs—the hallmark of ceremonial order, of tata—now distributed in such numbers that the conventional audience scene in the Kraton's Central Pavilion could not hold all of them at once and, thus, possibly, could no longer totally represent the realm but instead simply indicate privilege in serial replication from one ceremony to the next. The second advance responded, in turn, to the very speed of the times as if accelerating the kingly tour—the royal progress—by means of His Majesty's otomobil somehow could catch up with and perhaps even surpass progress itself in the 1920s. The third advance is particularly suggestive, however, concerning the remarkable complexity of the "Java"s that the Kraton was attempting to accommodate, if not fully incorporate, by

[18] *Pusaka Jawi* 1–2 ([Surakarta: Java-Instituut] 1929): 12.

1929. For this extension of privilege appeared to bring the "Java" of the Kraton, on the one hand, *and* of nationalist teacher/student associations and Javanology, on the other, face-to-face by means of a subtle distinction between "Jawi" and "Yapa." To get a sense of this distinction one must detour, for a moment, through several orthographic details.

"Yong Yapa" in the quotation is the Javanese reading of the *Dutch* titled Jong Java (Young Java), the Javanese student association founded in 1918—with the term *Yapa* performing a cross-lingual transformation, part translation, part transliteration. The Dutch word *Java* (pronounced "yava") was not, significantly enough, retranslated by Javanese back into their native tongue as *Jawa* (or in High Javanese as *Jawi* as it has appeared in most of the palace manuscripts quoted here), that is, it was not retranslated back into the *indigenous* term from which *Java* derives but instead approximated by a Javanese orthographic system that, lacking *v,* substituted *p*. When coupled with the Dutch reading of *j* as *y,* the two systems produced *Yapa.* The same lingual transformation applied, of course, to Javanology's Java Instituut—in Javanese, the Yapa Insetitut. For Dutch-schooled Javanese students of Javanology (Yapanologi!), *Yapa* was a thoroughly modern sounding expression—like *otomobil, lokomotip,* and *elektris*—which promised professional documentation, analysis, and preservation of their "own" culture. This form of cross-lingual distancing as a prelude to cultural enframing is precisely the sort noted (with reference to Tsuchiya's essay on Javanology) at the outset of this chapter: distancing that works across a linguistic gap to produce a sense of displacement and, as it were, objectivity.

So much for *Yapa* in the quotation. On the other hand appears *cara Jawi,* the very "Javanese fashion" which, through an extension of privilege, would dress these new guests of the Kraton. As noted in Chapter 1, the identity assumed in the figure "Jawi" arose in contradistinction to "Walandi." Since the first face-off between *cara Jawi* and *cara Walandi,* the sense of style associated with "Jawi" had produced, in Javanese, a world of difference, a nineteenth-century cultural universe of customs identifiably "Javanese." It was into this world that aspiring teachers (along with their students) were invited to enter, *as long as* they dressed "Javanese." That such characters were permitted to wear "Javanese whites"—semi-formal white jacket on top, conventional batik on bottom—in a privileged violation of the black-coats-only palace dress code, was facilitated by the fact that, strictly speaking (as my Javanese tutor, the late Mr. Suranto, studiously pointed out), this privilege was being extended expressly not to Javanese commoners, but *Yapanese.* Addressing His guests thus, and then cloaking them in "Javanese" style,

Pakubuwana X effectively circumvented a serious violation in palace protocol and, in the process, claimed yet another victory in Kraton advancement.

Despite Pakubuwana X's numerous, discrete victories in an era of progress, the Kraton Surakarta was incapable of advancing rapidly enough to overtake and really incorporate the momentum of kemadjoean. Even when perceived as an idealized repository of "Javanese" culture, the Kraton was, at the same time, all too obviously being bypassed by a much larger world. Much of the movement recorded in "A Royal Pairing" finds Pakubuwana X carried off to new destinations which might, somehow, rechart the realm. One such destination was the 1914 colonial exhibition in Central Java's port city of Semarang. Dutifully inscribed in "A Royal Pairing," the exhibition scene reveals both the increasingly provincial nature of Pakubuwana X's shrinking cosmos and the extent to which the world surrounding the Axis of the Cosmos had been redefined. The scene opens:

> The colonial exhibition
> was located south of the city proper
> on an expansive site
> in the mountain foothills
> among neatly parceled rice fields.
> Pavilions were erected
> along the lines of various
> models [*modhél*]: Dutch, Indies Chinese,
> Chinese, Indian, Palembang, Padang, Deli, Acehnese
> Bornean, Pontianak,
>
> Ambonese, Celebes, Bawean, Balinese,
> Madurese, and Javanese, East, Central,
> and West, all were created
> and filled with products
> from their respective regions.[19]

Pakubuwana X graciously buys tickets for himself and his entire entourage. He then enters the 1914 exhibition and is immediately encompassed by a well-ordered bounty of indigenous performing arts, tropical

[19] R. Ng. Purbadipura, *Sri Karongron* (Surakarta: Budi Utama, 1916), 4:178. The only extant manuscript copy of *Sri Karongron* (SMP KS 140) contains the first three of *Sri Karongron*'s four volumes. Citations from the fourth volume are taken from the published version.

potted plants, commercial promotion booths, fountains, trams, and (representing the modhél essence of colonial exhibitionism) model regional pavilions. Filling Surakarta's pavilion is the usual exhibition-hall assortment of local produce, trade goods, and cultural specimens, *plus* a special exhibit courtesy of the Kraton: "His Majesty's antiques, the king's regalia." Within the framework of the colonial exhibit, modern economic logic transforms Pakubuwanan regalia—quintessential emblems of kingship—into solid-gold memorabilia, a half-dozen or so prized royal antiques. Although "A Royal Pairing" is composed in a flat, report-it-as-you-see-it style, nevertheless, Pakubuwana X's visit to His Majesty's exhibit in Semarang is accompanied by a certain poignancy. Maintaining an air of detachment, the Pakubuwana chooses not to examine the exhibit but instead sits in state near the pavilion's entrance and commands his entourage to go ahead and have a look. This scene comes to an abrupt conclusion as the king suddenly has had enough:

> At thirty minutes
> after nine, His Majesty
> decreed to his brother [Prabuningrat]:
> "I want to return home now
> to Hotel Salatiga."[20]

In marked contrast to the relatively reclusive lifestyle of Pakubuwana IX, the era of progress frequently placed Pakubuwana X on the road in his otomobil or aboard His Majesty's extra coach or at home, as it were, in a hotel. Yet in spite of the pomp that necessarily accompanied such travels, Pakubuwana X's tours were made in strict accordance with colonial administrative policy: officially, the king traveled "incognito" (in Javanese, *inkohnito*). While touring, the Javanese king thus performed as an exemplary tourist traveling to keep up with a modern schedule of sites and times. In keeping with the times and incognito travels, Pakubuwana X sported a royal wardrobe of costumes that marvelously transformed His Majesty: "Arab" fashion with turban for visits to the mosque; cavalry style with a Panama hat for hunting expeditions; safari outfit and pith helmet for outings to the Borobudur. This constant costume changing entailed, however, a significant change in royal attitude toward the most familiar of all Pakubuwanan costumes, that worn for official Kraton occasions: the chestful of honorary medals—the Netherlands Grand

[20] Ibid., 4:181.

Fig. 6. A jaunty Pakubuwana X tours Central Javanese villages in His Majesty's automobile (c. 1915). Courtesy the Mangkunagaran Palace.

Cross, Red Eagle Star, Double Dragon, and so on—all the countless "en zo voort" emblems of authority.

By the early twentieth century, printed palace forms with fill-in-the-blank spaces for lists of medals were dutifully completed by palace scribes as a record of the particular constellation of honor the king would present on a given occasion. Pakubuwana X represented a powerful vacuity, an invisible figure for "Javanese" power *around* whom authority was constructed daily. It was rumored, however, that this king secretly derived a secondary pleasure from the medals, a pleasure that outweighed their conventional appeal. After hours and in the privacy of his inner Kraton quarters, Pakubuwana X was known to order palace servants carefully to pin great clusters of honorary medals to His Highness's behind. The king then sat quietly in state, smiling blissfully. Some courtiers argued that this was a gesture of protest against Dutch intrusion into Kraton affairs; others reasoned that although Pakubuwana X was endowed with a figure indeed grand, His Majesty had simply run out of space for all the honor bestowed upon him. In either case, the rumors pointed to the overextended status of twentieth-century Pakubuwanan

authority, and, most especially, to a hidden world lying behind Kraton appearances of ceremonial grandeur.[21]

Although the late nineteenth-century Pakubuwana IX had cultivated eccentricity and reclusiveness, he had done so in the grandiose style that his personalized Langenharja pleasure retreat was constructed to represent. Pakubuwana X was more of a closet eccentric whose personal cosmos was as confining as it was confined, as the story of the honorary medals indicates. Instead of making a fantasy move away from the Kraton Surakarta as Pakubuwana IX had done through Langenharja, he built a fantasy miniature mountain—Argo Dalem, "His Majesty's Mountain"—as a wistful sign of where a new palace *might* have been located, in the innermost recesses of the palace proper.[22] Pakubuwana IX's mystical eye allegedly could see events as they happened anywhere in the world; Pakubuwana X was rumored still good for twenty-five kilometers, maybe fifty on a good day, more or less the Kraton Surakarta's administrative radial distance, although this equation was never explicitly made. The exceptional powers and eccentric whims attributed true Javanese kingship thus were recognized in Pakubuwana X, albeit rather reduced in reach.[23] He was known to converse with all animals in their respective languages, a classic kingly gift, but was particularly fond of small birds, for whom he held formal funerals with little caskets.

The twentieth-century Pakubuwana was best known, however, for his power of prophecy. Most of Pakubuwana X's prophecies—often numerologically concealed in the exact numbers of trees, pillars, and ornaments built into the design of timely palace additions—pointed to the end of an era, indeed, the end of the world that once appeared to revolve around the Kraton Surakarta. With Pakubuwana X's death, Pakubuwanan power would, in essence, evaporate. Of the king's dozens of offspring by palace concubines—only one child, a daughter, was borne by an official queen—none would be endowed with the special talents associated with kingship. Pakubuwana X thus dubbed his youngest son Prince Barja, a

[21] This story still circulates widely among older Kraton courtiers. Although there is, not surprisingly, no Javanese textual evidence for it, in the spirit of the materials that follow in the section, I find it quite plausible as an early twentieth century response to His Majesty's shrinking cosmos.

[22] Nancy Florida, personal communication. Argo Dalem was adorned with a single tree transplanted from a forest just north of Central Java's Mt. Lawu.

[23] Pakubuwana X's many travels complicated some of the customs attending Javanese kingship. During tours and overnight stays at hotels en route, His Majesty's feces were routinely collected by palace servants and carried back to the Kraton where they were properly disposed of, lest the cosmic ecology become upset.

name that in the 1980s the elderly prince still took great pleasure in deciphering: "Prince Barja, that's me, 'the end of prosperity' [bu*bar* ing raha*rja*]!"

The logic behind such foresight on Pakubuwana X's part had a certain, if esoteric, history. Just months after Pakubuwana VI was exiled to Ambon in 1830, his queen (who remained in Surakarta) gave birth to the exiled king's son, a prince destined to put the Kraton's genealogy of magical power back on track thirty-one years later by becoming Pakubuwana IX. At the time of his birth, a spirit twin brother also emerged and was heard wailing away but not seen. This twin, as Kraton lore would have it, took up residence on the sacred Mt. Lawu just east of Surakarta, acted as a spiritual guardian for Pakubuwana IX, and reinstated the mountain's position as the powerful eastern cosmological anchor of the palace. Meanwhile, Pakubuwana IX renewed an otherworldly alliance with the Queen of the South—the spirit goddess of the southwestern point of cosmic reference of the palace, again, the very goddess that Pakubuwana VI allegedly visited on the eve of his exile—by his many rendezvous with the goddess at the Langenharja retreat. Through the doubled efforts of the twins, the archaic cosmological wiring of Pakubuwanan power thus was imagined in working order once again.[24]

With the accession of Pakubuwana X, however, a sort of supernatural short-circuiting occurred. Following in the customary steps of his father, on one particularly charged night, Pakubuwana X ascended the steep staircase of the Kraton's so-called "Buttress of the Cosmos" (Sanggabuwana) meditation tower. It was here that the young king planned to have his first encounter with his would-be spirit consort, the Queen of the South. But just as Pakubuwana X reached the top step, he slipped, started to fall, and suddenly was saved by an invisible pair of arms accompanied by an eerie voice: "Oh, my dear child [*Adhuh, anakku nggèr*]!" "What's this 'my dear child' business? You're supposed to be my lover, not my mother!" the king blurted in Low Javanese, recognizing the voice of the goddess. The spirit queen answered with apocalyptic thunder and lightning followed by a command: the old relationship was over; thenceforth, she would treat the king not as consort but as her *son.*[25]

[24] For a published version of the Pakubuwana IX "twins" story, see *Jatno-Hisworo,* pp. 14–17. On the cosmological significance of Mt. Lawu and the Southern Ocean, see Chapters 4 and 7.

[25] A common alternative version of the "My dear child" story, where the incident happens on the South Ocean beach, appears in Yoharni Harjono Totong Tirtawidjaya, Hary-

Begot by power, Pakubuwana X himself was unable to beget power and, thus, remained, as long as he lived, the final creation of a system of cosmic reproduction no longer capable of reproducing itself, a grand sign that the end was in sight. Grand as it was, the sign was effectively empty, for Pakubuwana X signified a powerful vacuity around which authority was ceremoniously constructed. The power of this vacuity derived, as we have seen, from the "Javanese" ruler's appearance (from Pakubuwana II and 1745 on) as a figuration of the displaced realm, another, ideal "Java" necessarily absent from view, preserved from the colonized present, prophetically deferred into the future—all the time suffused with a hidden meaning. In Pakubuwana X, however, the power of vacuity expanded and acquired a double meaning. This thoroughly twentieth-century Surakarta monarch reigned not only as a conventional Pakubuwanan figure of displacement but as an extended, premonitory sign anticipating the displacement of the Pakubuwanan figure itself. The throne of vacuity would *itself* soon become permanently vacated.

The contradiction of the Kraton's creation thus attained a terminally perfect significance during this Pakubuwana's reign. When Pakubuwana X died on February 20, 1939, he did so, amazingly, on the first of the Javanese month Sura, the highly charged first day of the Javanese new year, the most powerfully endowed moment cosmologically conceivable. The palace's largest and notoriously potent gong, Sir Surak—*surak*, "the noise of spectators cheering"—ceased to sound and would, in fact, remain silent ever after. It was as if the prophecies had been realized, the royal progress of 1745 had arrived at its logical destination, and the spectacle revolving around the dynasty within the "Palace of Surakarta, Finest in the World" had, at last, concluded, entirely of its *own* accord. At least such were the in-house rumors that accompanied Pakubuwana X's passing.[26] To the extent that this last true Surakarta king recalled the recovered kingdom of "Java," that, too, might now be forever deferred.

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adi, Suyono, Karyadi, and Siti Faizah, *Sastra Lisan Jawa* (Jakarta: Pusat Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Bahasa, Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1979), p. 224. *Sri Karongron* reveals that later on in Pakubuwana X's reign, the meditation tower was used on Thursday nights for recitals of Western dance music including waltzes and polkas. Perhaps the king was trying to tease his would-be consort with the latest in sounds or, perhaps too, the waltzes were just meant for "mom."

[26] Years later, Pakubuwana X would be remembered as predicting the arrival of the Japanese, the dropping of the first atomic bomb, and the date of Indonesia's declaration of independence. For most older Solonese these predictions concerned, at the time, the definitive end of an era rather than the nature of what would follow.

Figures for Replication: Character, Costume, Custom

Irretrievably involved, as it was, in a redoubled Surakartan discourse of cultivated eccentricity *and* cultural centrism, the Kraton's "Java" would not, could not, of course, simply pass away. Indeed, the more the modern age of kemadjoean—that advancing specter of progress—seemed to bypass Pakubuwana X's palace, the more it appeared to acknowledge the inevitability of a prophesied end as if paying tribute to the very prophetic powers of which the Kraton Surakarta was fast becoming a trace. Hence, the more haunting this marginalized "Java" became, its days now profoundly numbered, for those who would salvage the "Java" of the past in the name of what was becoming, equally fast (thanks to the logic of modernity), "tradition." Among the variously rendered, ever-expanding moves toward recovering such a "Java," three discursive approaches—the first primarily in Dutch, the second typically in Malay, and the last in Javanese—are significant for their identifiably singular, though necessarily related, revelations concerning the "Javanese" subject of the early twentieth century. The vision that appears to guide all three approaches is (again, in the spirit of modernity) that of a unified, recognizably "Javanese" individual. Yet the singularity of the approaches suggests that the subject of "Java" could not be fully recuperated in such an individualized form, that some original peculiarity might always remain hidden—or then again, if it could, it would never be the same.

Not surprisingly, few characters in modern Javanese history responded with more devotion to recovering the spirit of "Java" than a son of Mangkunagara V, Prince Soerjosoeparto (b. 1885), inheritor of the Mangkunagaran legacy and palace. Within a year after returning from schooling and military training in Holland, Soerjosoeparto was installed as Mangkunagara VII (r. 1916–44). If Pakubuwana X seemed destined, in the end, to take "Java" with him, Prince Mangkunagara VII appeared fated to recover, systematically, all that such a loss might imply.

Well versed in the moralizing "Javanese" lessons of his father and grandfather *and* in the moral doctrines guiding the Dutch colonial policy of Ethical pursuits, Mangkunagara VII represented for many Surakartan priyayi an exemplary spirit of the times.[27] Unlike Pakubuwana X, this

[27] For an introduction to this Mangkunagaran ruler's career, particularly his role as Mangkunagara VI's (r. 1896–1916) replacement, see Larson, *Prelude to Revolution,* pp. 59–75. (As was the case with previous Mangkunagaras, Mangkunagara VII did not formally receive the title "Mangkunagara" until his fortieth birthday, in 1924.)

prince was genuinely engaged, by colonial standards, in his kemadjoean efforts. Mangkunagaran neighborhoods in Surakarta displayed a new form of social dedication entirely different from that manifested in the archaic maze of walls and alleyways forming the neighborhoods attached to the Kraton. Dead ends and blind streets were opened up to facilitate the flow of social life; this new openness facilitated, in turn, modern forms of surveillance as local administration offices were relocated at the corners of major intersections connecting Mangkunagaran precincts. Houses of Mangkunagaran officials were architecturally standardized in accordance with their inhabitant's rank. And, with an enthusiasm that rivaled even Dutch devotion to hydraulics, Mangkunagara VII systematized local waterworks.[28] Older Surakartans still residing in these neighborhoods recall the new appearance of order (tata) that ruled in Mangkunagaran blocks, an order now generally perceived as "traditional" in New Order times.

What this form of kemadjoean created space for in the early twentieth century were the numbers of souls who might now inhabit the new social order that was increasingly surrounding them, the numerous "Javanese" subjects who could appear as statistical identities in census reports. The twin forces of identification and enumeration assumed by colonial census taking were welcomed and furthered by a variety of Mangkunagaran kemadjoean activities. Just as there were now agricultural contests in which particularly well-developed livestock from Mangkunagaran territories were ranked ("1-2-3") with owners displaying numbered placards for their prize-winning entries, Mangkunagaran-sponsored bicycle contests pinned identification numbers to the chests of all who would compete. Such embodied enumeration expressed the intensely colonizing logic of such efforts, a logic graphically evident in the calisthenic feat of Mangkunagaran boys-club youths stretching and linking themselves as well-developed colonial subjects of Queen Wilhemina, to form the letters "H-M-K-W," Hare Majesteit Koningin Wilhelmina. But it was the patently cultural "Javanese" subject that Mangkunagara VII was so devoted to developing.

Writing on three colonially situated institutions of power that, transformed in the Benjaminian age of mechanical reproduction, significantly

[28] Mangkunagara VII's zeal for irrigation development and similar projects initially brought him into conflict with Dutch administrators (Larson, *Prelude to Revolution,* p. 68). The prince's fluency in hydraulics terminology is most evident in his speech at the Tirtomarto Reservoir dedication ceremony in 1920, a ceremony held as part of the "thirty-five day" (*selapanan*) festivities marking Mangkunagara VII's marriage to a daughter of Hamengkubuwana VII.

informed postcolonial nation-states, Benedict Anderson offers the following suggestive comment:

> Interlinked with one another, then, the census, map and the museum illuminate the late colonial state's style of thinking about its domain. The "warp" of this thinking was a totalizing classificatory grid, which could be applied with endless flexibility to anything under the state's real or contemplated control: peoples, regions, religions, languages, products, monuments, and so forth. The effect of the grid was always to be able to say of anything that it was this, not that; it belonged here, not there. It was bounded, determinate, and therefore—in principle—countable. . . . The "weft" was what one could call serialization: the assumption that the world was made up of replicable plurals.[29]

As heir to a vision that had emerged internally, through cara Jawi, precisely in contradistinction to what it was not, cara Walandi, Mangkunagara VII elaborated on this vision in a fashion that ideally fit the classificatory space alloted him by just such a grid: "Java." While the Kraton's "Java" was headed toward prophetic self-displacement in fulfillment of the contradiction of its creation, in the Mangkunagaran Palace the figure of "Java" had been refined into a subject of self-approval, a model figure fit for replication and dissemination. With Mangkunagara VII, this refinement achieved a certain perfection as if in fulfillment of the prince's own "Javanese" heritage, that is, the very heritage of Mangkunagara IV and son whose culturalizing endeavors prefigured the "Java" that would later command formal Javanological attention. Thus while one of the "Java"s of our "Java Doubles" was, quite understandably, protectively sequestering itself into cosmic oblivion, in the kemadjoean age of mechanical reproduction the other was busier than ever replicating for the world all that its counterpart was destined not to be. In 1919, Mangkunagara VII was named honorary chairman of Javanology's newly founded Java Institute. No one was better suited.

That this twentieth-century Mangkunagara headed the Java Institute did not mean that he actually directed all its various pursuits (which included, for the sake of scholarly comparison, work on Bali and Madura as well as Java), but that he represented, in iconic form, just the sort of "Javanese" subject to whom Javanology might be wholeheartedly dedicated. To this end, in his royal manner and, again, in the spirit of his ancestors, Mangkunagara VII executed duties of state in an exemplary

[29] Benedict R. O'Gorman Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991), p. 184.

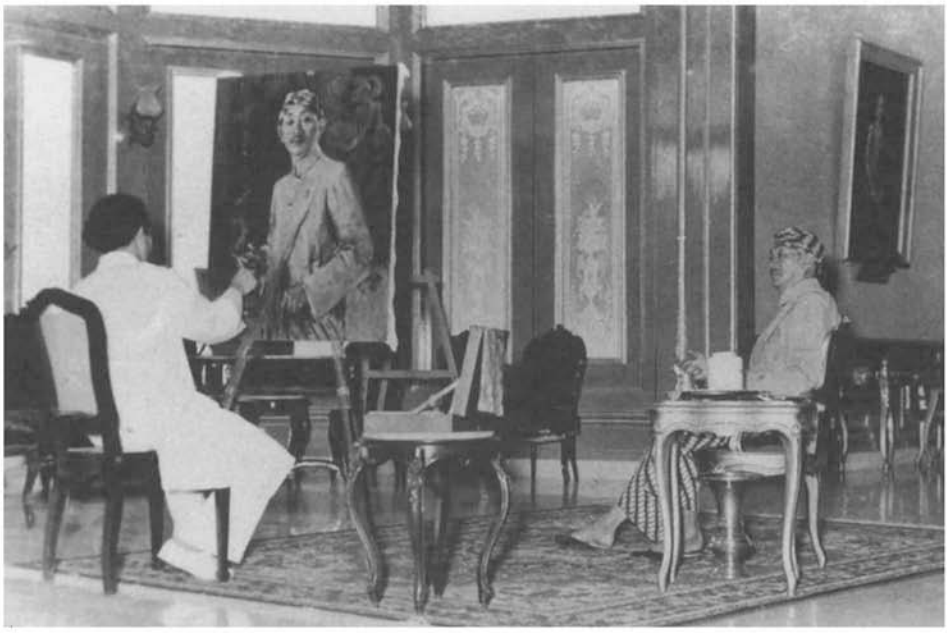


Fig. 7. Mangkunagara VII, honorary chairman of the Java Institute and refined representative of "Java," poses for a royal portrait (c. 1935). Courtesy the Mangkunagaran Palace.

fashion, a modern social vision of kemadjoean balanced by, and devoted to, a marked sense of "Javanese" cultural inheritance. Opening ceremonies for Mangkunagaran development projects in rural areas invariably were accompanied by a selection of folk performances (*pertoendjoekan*) chosen to typify cultural wealth in much the same manner that exhibitions containing local produce, livestock, and handicrafts were designed to display an indigenous natural wealth. Mangkunagaran photograph albums meticulously documented such performances as enframed images of "Java"'s living past and were accompanied, typically, by generic captions: "a masked dancer," "the shadow-puppet performance." Even the Prince's own postnuptial celebration after his 1920 wedding to a daughter of Hamengkubuwana VII displayed this spirit of cultural exhibitionism (but given the pivotal position occupied by royal weddings in the genealogy of "Java," what celebration would be more appropriate for such a display?) by presenting an entire Balinese gamelan ensemble, shipped in for the occasion, "with players." "Painful to the ears, *jrang jrèng thèng thèng* like a Chinese gamelan," read the versified account of

Fig. 8. Mangkunagara VII, with wedding gifts and his bride, Gusti Ratu Timur (daughter of the sultan of Yogyakarta, Hamengkubuwana VII), 1920. Courtesy the Mangkunagaran Palace.

the Mangkunagaran scribe assigned to cover the wedding.[30] No doubt alert to His Highness's cross-culturalizing proclivities, the scribe apparently could not suppress his own shock, jrang jrèng thèng thèng, the Javanized equivalent to Earle's "monotonous wail," or perhaps, too, this was the way a "Balinese" or "Chinese" gamelan was supposed to sound to "Javanese" ears.

But it was in the context of the numerous 1920s and 1930s so-called Culture Congresses and Javanological study groups made up of aristocrats, officials, and literati (Javanese and Europeans alike), that Mangkunagara VII's special contribution to "Javanese" culture—indeed, to the very spirit of "Java"—was most clearly pronounced. These were groups who, according to the introductory guidelines of the first issue of

[30] R. Ng. Citrasantana, *Serat Ngrèngrèng Babad Dalem Kangjeng Gusti kaping VII* (composed and inscribed Surakarta, mid- to late 1920s). Ms. RP uncat.; SMP MN 229C, p. 256. The wedding was attended by Goesti Djilantik, self-governor of Karangasem, Bali.

the journal *Djåwå*, were devoted to developing "'the indigenous culture of Java, Madoera, and Bali' by 'in the first place promoting and disseminating knowledge of their culture.'"[31] In December 1932, at a meeting of the Cultural-Philosophical Study Circle (Cultuur-Wijsgeerigen Studiekring) held at the Mangkunagaran Palace, the Prince delivered, in Dutch, an eloquent lecture on wayang shadow-puppet performance, a lecture that became (and remains) a classic in Javanological circles: "Over de wajang-koelit (poerwa) in het algemeen en over de daarin voorkomende symbolische en mystieke elementen" (On the wayang kulit [purwa] and its symbolic and mystical elements).[32] Presenting wayang performance as active evidence of, as Mangkunagara VII put it, a *zeer hooge beschaving*, "very high civilization," the native vorst no doubt wished to elevate the status of his "Javanese" beschaving to that of Western civilization.

What the prince was searching for was an indigenous representation of character and person—a "self"—of philosophical import so weighty that the universality of its significance could not be denied, even by those souls steeped in European scholarly tradition. What he had discovered in wayang performance (through an exercise in "Javanese" self-reflexivity exemplary in its own right) was nothing less than an extended metaphor for meditation and, in the end, self discovery. "Every person," the prince noted, "at a certain time of life wants to know who his father is and, in a mystical sense, this wish may be developed into a desire *to comprehend the origin and aim of life.*"[33] Nearing his conclusion, Mangkunagara VII addressed this desire in unusually revealing terms: "It is all reflected in the rhythms of his [the puppeteer's] beats against the wayang-chest [the *kothak*, the wooden chest containing puppets for performance and used for sound effects], which is supposed to represent the accelerated heart-beats of the meditation-practitioner and the noises heard by him in the phase when the 'spiritual self' [*"geestelijk ik"*] is being crystallized."[34] The lecture then ended with an appeal to "the genuine Javanese national spirit" (*de echt-Javaansche nationale geest*), a spirit that appears

[31] The translation and paraphrase of this quotation is taken from Tsuchiya, "Javanology and the Age of Ranggawarsita," p. 91.

[32] K. G. P. A. A. Mangkunagara [Mangkoenagoro] VII, "Over de wajang-koelit (poerwa) in het algemeen en over de daarin voorkomende symbolische en mystieke elementen," *Djåwå* 13 (1933): 79–97. The translation of the title is taken from Claire Holt: K. G. P. A. A. Mangkunagara [Mangkunagoro] VII, *On the Wayang Kulit (Purwa) and Its Symbolic and Mystical Elements*, trans. Claire Holt, Southeast Asia Program Data Paper, no. 27 (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1957).

[33] Mangkunagara VII, *On the Wayang Kulit*, p. 16 (emphasis added).

[34] Ibid., p. 19 (brackets added).

to emerge from the shadow-puppeteer himself to counter Western civilization's philosophical monopoly on spiritual matters and, of course, nationalist discourse which did not acknowledge the supremacy of "Java." Not all of the colony's cultures could lay claim, after all, to a zeer hooge beschaving.

It was precisely this thoroughly culturalized figure of a spiritual self, this crystallized "I," that the prince hoped to reveal, as if it were his own, to the Javanological audience, a figure that could be promoted and disseminated, in the spirit of Javanology, through acts of repeated recognition. In a very real sense, this figure depended on and was constituted by just such moments of revelation, moments that *only* could be achieved through dissemination; that is, knowledge of such an "I" required an audience to whom it could be revealed and through whom it might be recognized. For at stake was a secret. Introducing the lecture, Mangkunagara VII concluded his prefatory remarks with this promising note: "In the address to follow . . . I have dared to lift a small tip of the veil to show how in the wayang lies hidden the secret Javanese knowledge [*de geheime Javaansche wetenschap*] concerning the deepest significance of life."[35]

The prince's reference to a "secret Javanese knowledge" appealed to the same sense of another "Java"—a realm ideally hidden from everyday perception—that had inspired Mangkunagara IV's 1870s vision of "Java" in "Exemplary Wisdom" where "a knowledge sublime . . . is the religion of the rulers." (Just five years before the 1932 lecture, Mangkunagara VII had sponsored the publication of his grandfather's extensive collected works, edited in four volumes.) But unlike "Exemplary Wisdom" through which Mangkunagara IV meant to bequeath the essence of "Java," through deferral, to future generations of Javanese royal elite, Mangkunagara VII's studiekring lecture was designed to *demonstrate,* on the spot, the immense value of "Javanese" civilization's cultural inheritance to a quasi-professional audience. To do this, the prince had to speak as if exposing, momentarily, an essentially esoteric knowledge, as if lifting, in true Orientalist fashion, a small tip of the veil. With Mangkunagara VII, the "Java" that had long anticipated translation found its ideal translateur and patron. The more hauntingly obscure the Kraton's "Java"—the other "Java"—grew in the shadow of Pakubuwana X, the more urgent was the sense of a secret knowledge concerning the deepest significance of life and all the more desirable the figure of an exemplary "Java," indeed, a "genuine Javanese national spirit." In an

[35] Ibid., p. 1.

age of kemadjoean reproduction, the subject of that knowledge *crystallized* (as the prince put it, just as certainly as Mangkunagaran sugar was now scientifically produced) within the newly charted space of "Java" in the form of an identifiably indigenous self, a Javanized "geestelijk ik," a generalizable character desiring to comprehend the origin and aim of life, in short, a refined, personalized figuration of "Java" as suitable for replication as it was proud to wear its cultural past in the form of "Javanese tails."

Mangkunagara VII's philosophical commentary on the "Javanese" spirit was, of course, part of a much broader discourse on identity developing in the Indies in the early twentieth century, a discourse increasingly mediated by newspapers, magazines, catalogs of advertisements and books devoted to customs, manners, beliefs, and much else that might inform the subject of "Java." It is tempting, in retrospect, to assume a certain universalist priority of the notion of self in Mangkunagara VII's lecture, as if its "I" must always stand behind, as it were, particular constructions of identity. This is especially so when rereading nationalist thought of the period characteristically cast in the form of a natural awakening of spirit or identity in the Indies as elsewhere. But the crystallizing subject of "Java" in the early twentieth century discloses, perhaps, not so much a figure of identity as a figure *for* identification. For just as the Javanized "ik" emerged to inhabit spiritually the newly replicable space created for "Java," the very figure of "Java" that made such an identification possible emerged much earlier not out of expressions explicitly pertaining to self (or person, or even, initially, custom) but, most fundamentally, to costume: cara Jawi. Wrapping itself within just the terms by which the deepest significance of life might appear to exist, the "Javanese spirit" thus represented, in effect, the final layering of signification onto the subject of "Java" by refashioning it as subjectivity.

Nowhere was the sociocultural space that this spiritual figuration was fashioned to fill better illustrated than in the mail order catalog distributed by the highly esteemed priyayi Surakarta clothing store called, most appropriately, Sidho-Madjoe (Succeed-Progress!), the second of our three sources for retracing the subject of "Java" in an age of modern reproduction. Appealing to a sense of "Javanese" genuineness virtually identical to that informing the prince's reflections but expressed in commercial-media Malay rather than Javanological Dutch, the introductory page of the 1928 Sidho-Madjoe catalog opens:

THE KNOWLEDGE [*ILMOE*] OF THE BATIK-DYEING OPERATION
This is a knowledge of dyeing that exists as an heirloom [*poesaka*] from

Fig. 9. Front and back covers of Sidho-Madjoe's 1928 illustrated mail order catalog. On the front, the business owner, Tjan Tjoe Twan, appears in "Dutch" style, on the back, in "Javanese."

> Tanah Djawa, which for such a long time the Europeans—despite their many noble knowledgeable skills—to this day still have not been able to achieve like the genuine product [*bikinan aseli*] from Java.[36]

Batik-dyeing is presented here as yet another form of a geheime Javaansche wetenschap, an esoteric knowledge from the "Land of Java" unequaled in the West, a means of production whose products are as identifiably genuine as the numerous "Javanese" souls who would identify themselves through them. Although "genuine Javanese" batik from Surakarta formed the core of this clothier's business, Sidho-Madjoe supplied its customers with much more than batik. The catalog was a means of outfitting countless native colonial administrators from top to bureaucratic bottom, from Buitenzorg to Borneo. Every form of official character was provided for from full dress uniform costumes for top-ranking regional regents, "A Regent suit [*costuum Boepati*] with yellow ceremonial parasol, No. 1 quality: 250 guilders, No. 2: 175," to a village headman's hat with a Wilhelmina *W* sewn on the front, "6 guilders." Not only

[36] Sidho-Madjoe, *Geillustreerde Prijscourant* (Surakarta: Tjan Tjoe Twan, 1928), p. 1. Sidhoe-Majoe's owner, Tjan Tjoe Twan, was a Surakartan of Chinese descent.

was there a vast selection of service caps, chin straps, cufflinks, belt-buckles, keris accessories, ceremonial standards, and other similar necessities from which to choose and order but the catalog's novel shadow-puppet figures (*wajangsfiguren*) tablecloths and wall hangings brought the replication and dissemination of "Java" home into the newly appointed life space of the living room. Completing the offerings designed to satisfy fully the emerging tastes of its subscribers, the final page of the catalog listed suitable reading material: books printed "in Javanese language and script, set in verse and prose," including, of course, Mangkunagara IV's own "Exemplary Wisdom," "0.80 guilders."

All of this was evidence of the "Succeed" link in the store's name. The "Progress" link referred both to the bureaucratic achievement anticipated through the purchase of this paraphernalia and to certain progressive achievements in design, most notably, the new "ready-to-wear" or *blancon* style of many items in the catalog. Turbans no longer needed to be wrapped repeatedly by their wearers but instead were already sewn into form, "already tata," always already constituted, owing to the blancon breakthrough. Even the magnificently billowing, conventionally wrapped ceremonial gown known as kampuh—the same ceremonial attire in which Mangkunagara I, by not dressing "Dutch" you will recall, remained firm—was now ready-to-go as the "kampoeh blancon." Borrowed from the Dutch *blanco,* a term used in the Indies for bureaucratic and commercial blank forms designed to be filled in for completion or endorsement, blancon fashion fitted its subjects into a prefabricated interval that was at once patently progressive and thoroughly "Javanese." With much enthusiasm, an advertisement in the 1929 program for a Young Java Pathfinder's Congress (sponsored by Mangkunagara VII) proclaimed: "Kemadjoean! Kemadjoean! Blancon Headwear!"

The subjective effect of such replicable expressions of "Javanese" identity was readily apparent in the dozens of satisfied customer testimonials that filled the back pages of the catalog. On April 3, 1928, the Regent of Pasoeroean, East Java, wrote, for example: "Although I did not come in person for a fitting, it didn't need even the slightest alteration. The formal jacket you made for me was finely tailored both in cut—*snit*—and detail, and is a pleasure to its wearer. In light of such diligence, I will not hesitate to recommend this to all my friends."[37] Like most of Sidho-Madjoe's outfitted customers who mailed in their measurements, this "Javanese" official was amazed at the uncanny fit of his Regent Suit. Now he could just snap on his costume and in an instant, as so many other priyayi

[37] Ibid., p. 34.

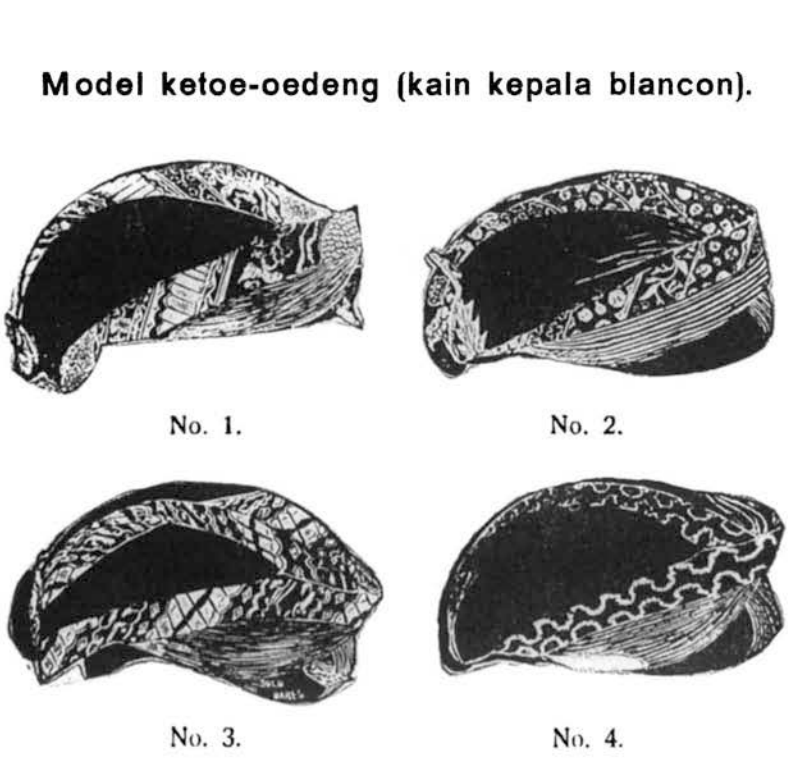


Fig. 10. Sidho-Madjoe's novel *blancon* ready-to-wear turban headwear: four choices (*Geillusttreerde Prijscourant,* 1928, p. 8).

testified for the catalog, look grand. Finely tailored, both in cut and detail, the figure of "Java" could, at last, express the gratitude of the person it contained in the form of an endorsement from a figure who never came for a fitting in person.[38]

While Mangkunagara VII's Javanologically rendered self provided the newly individualized figure of "Java" a particular spirit, a reflection on inner character, Sidho-Madjoe provided that figure a blancon format with which, once filled in, the "Javanese" character might then emerge as immediately recognizable. There was, thus, a certain creative tension between these two forms of identification. The more persuasive the effects of the clothier's cara Jawi voguing, "I will not hesitate to recommend this to all my friends," the more effective was the prince's appeal, "I have dared to lift a small tip of the veil," to a genuine "Javanese" national spirit. It was as if behind the veil of a Regent suit with yellow

[38] I am indebted to Marilyn Ivy for her insights concerning the uncanniness of this fit and modern forms of subjectivity.

ceremonial parasol, such a character *had* to exist. And yet, given the specific genealogy of the "Javanese" figure, borne as it was from a wardrobe distinction with cara Jawi fashioned in contradistinction to cara Walandi, its newfound subject appeared cloaked in a style that might not fully translate the ontological weight of a geestelijk ik and, thus, remain partially unsuitable to a modern rhetoric of individuality. It was in light of this shadowy logic of veils—this unusual fit between subject and style—that yet another, related early twentieth-century discourse on the subject of "Java" would prove so compelling. To begin to disclose the contours of this discourse, I must return briefly to the status of the term *cara*.

As observed in Chapter 1, when combined with *Walandi* or *Jawi* in the context of nineteenth-century Surakarta chronicles, *cara* conventionally designated "costume." As also noted, *cara* referred more generally, however, to a way or manner of doing something and, thus, lent itself rather easily to eventual reification as custom; one village has its customs for, say, wedding, another, another. It was because of these more general implications of *cara,* after all, that a "Dutch"/"Java" distinction expressed primarily in terms of attire should appear so striking, that is, that a distinction of such fundamental import should be based specifically on costume rather than a more generalized sense of custom. During the nineteenth century, the world originally fashioned in the name of cara Jawi would broaden to distinguish "Javanese" language, customs, literature, and so on, and, thus, expand toward a recognizably cultural world ideally fit for Javanological revelations.

Moreover, *cara* would continue to articulate an *internal* world of differences, juxtaposing, for example, one village's or region's practices to those of another. This internal articulation of practices was facilitated, in turn, by the nineteenth-century appearance of "Javanese" kingdoms as well-ordered realms of cultural behavior whose rules of measure (like those inscribed in "The Book of Nobility") were, by definition, centered in the palace. Village practices became drawn into an ideal structure of customary behavior that systematically ordered those practices *as* customs or, better yet, local customs. This structure was known, appropriately enough, as *tatacara*. Thus, *cara*'s sense of identifiable style combined with *tata*'s sense of order and structure to produce a most durable vision of cultural configuration; through the construct tatacara, a multiplicity of customary practices were charted not only as correct or incorrect, proper or improper, but arranged within a highly centered structure of customs as so many versions or variations. More far-reaching than etiquette (*tatakrama*) or good grammar in speech (*tata-*

basa), tatacara would stretch to articulate a well-defined cultural landscape in the name of "Java." By the early twentieth century, the model cultural grammar built into tatacara was explored for meaning through the following adage: "The city uses order [tata], villages customs [cara]" (*Kuta mawa tata, dêsa mawa cara*). What was once, perhaps, a plenitude of practices was now ruled by a singular system of thought that contained these practices as varied yet unified expressions of "Javanese" custom. With the impending retreat of a specifically Kraton-focused cosmic ordering of things and the concurrent rise of a generalized, replicable identity for the subject of "Java," tatacara discourse began to fashion a life of its very own.

The first scholar to inscribe such a life was Ki Padmasusastra, in many respects, "Java"'s first modern ethnographer, although Ki Padma never identified himself as such. In 1893, just after returning from a brief sojourn in Holland as an informant on Javanese language, the Surakarta scribe and author Padmasusastra began work on a lengthy book, in Javanese, substantially different from his previous work on literature, language usage, dictionary compilation, and related areas of linguistic interest. Completed eleven years later, the book was first published in 1907 and subtitled "The Customary Practices and Behavior of Javanese People Who Still Adhere to Superstitions." The title was more concise: *Tatacara*, probably best translated as "Customs and Manners," in keeping with "tatacara"'s everyday feel, although something like "The Structure of Customs" perhaps comes closer to the particular systematicity that the book would assume.[39] Padmasusastra's introduction to *Tatacara* revealed a somewhat saddened, notably threatened, almost resigned sense of a vast world of knowledge (*kawruh*) closing in, with no space for escape. It began:

> From this overwhelmed feeling I have, as if the entire world were already jammed with knowledge, densely packed, no internal spaces are left. Thinking has become a struggle, as if parting a dense fog that covers the face of the earth, and I feel crowded out *as if no place has been allotted me* [*kados sampun boten keduman papan*]. Whatever I intend to do has already been done, in full, by the ancient poets of the realm fifty years ago, growing in the center of this world, its fruits flourished—but it was difficult to acquire. Javanese people were unable to nurture it and could not grasp it because they did not have the means. So it

[39] Ki Padmasusastra, *Tatacara: Adat sarta Kalakuwanipun Titiyang Jawi ingkang Taksih Lumengket dhateng Gugon Tuhon* (Batavia: Kangjeng Gupremèn, 1907).

> remained simply admired [by Javanese] until it was finally picked out [or "cited," *pinethik*; in Javanese, one "plucks" fruits and quotations] and *disseminated again by European scholars, this second growth of knowledge flourishing even more so, filling up the world.* For instance, there was: the *Javaansch Woordenboek*, with repeated printings and new editions, written by Mister J. F. C Gericke, expanded by Mister T. Rooda, expanded once again by Mister A. C. Vreede [and so on, through a brief litany of Dutch scholarly achievements]. . . . And now, the greatest authorities on Javanese literature come from another people, *returning to reteach again the Javanese people.*[40]

The author introduces himself as someone caught in a double, perhaps triple, bind. Not only does he feel unable, understandably, to write *as* did the "ancient poets of the realm" (much less as a purveyor of modern forms of knowledge, which, though unmentioned in this introduction, he had just encountered in Europe), even his efforts at writing authoritatively *about* Javanese language and literature seem to have been usurped by Dutch scholars. Indeed, this secondary literature—this "second growth of knowledge"—was now flourishing "even more so" with its repeated printings and editions and filling up the world with still more knowledge. The suggestion that "now, the greatest authorities on Javanese literature come from another people, returning to reteach again the Javanese people" thus discloses remarkably little, if any, irony, for this was a field of knowledge that the Dutch had, it would seem, created though tirelessly labored within by Javanese literati informants like Padmasusastra himself. What the suggestion presents, rather, is a dilemma: How might a Surakartan author find a "place" in a world where no appropriate discursive interval would appear, an interval between the ancient poets of the realm and the new authorities on the realm? That the ancient poets are located only "fifty years" past—counting back from 1893, when the manuscript was begun, yields 1843, Padmasusastra's date of birth—heightens the introduction's sense of urgency. It is as if the author's own life (1843–1926) had been crowded out by the near completeness of two overlapping worlds of discourse, one already "done, in full," and the other rapidly "filling up."

From this potentially invisible position, Padmasusastra turned to *Tatacara* for a response. With this book, he would repay his scholarly debts to foreign authorities, and he would do so in a form that was characteristically "Javanese" by reversing the derogatory connotations of "superstí-

[40] Ibid., p. iii (brackets and emphasis added).

tions" (*gugon tuhon*) and reframing them as customs. The introduction continues:

> Since among our Javanese people there are, in fact, many who are still of one mind that adheres to superstitions, my feeling is that there may be some usefulness, even for non-Javanese who have escaped superstitiousness, in offering a glimpse of the character of the Javanese people [*wawatekanipun tiyang Jawi*]. For what I have in mind, I shall compose a story of the tatacara along with the customary practices and behavior of a Javanese person, *beginning* as a baby in the womb, then . . . [the author then lists various rites whose sequencing will produce a whole life] *until* the story of a person's death.[41]

Padmasusastra thus constructed his work in the form of a story (*cariyos*) following a narrativized presentation of what modern anthropologists would readily identify as life-cycle rituals. From pregnancy and birth to childhood and puberty rites, the wedding ceremony, and funeral practices, *Tatacara* traced the trajectory of a completed "life." Although this progression from birth to death rites may seem an entirely natural process in a person's life, such a ritual trajectory was quite new in turn-of-the-century Java where indigenous formulations of domestic practices conventionally placed birth and weddings (along with agricultural concerns) in one endless cycle of fertile procreation and treated funerals as a different matter altogether, rather than linking these practices in the form of a personal progress. I will return to such formulations later, in Chapter 5; here, however, two features of the customary personal progress assumed by *Tatacara* are noteworthy.

First, the colonized subject was rescued from global anonymity and given a place, a frame for individuality and character whose life, as a "Javanese," was endowed with individual ritual meaning. While Arnold van Gennep was still busy, back in Europe, theorizing the ritual framework that would make his *The Rites of Passage* a foundational classic in anthropological discourse for generations to come, Padmasusastra had already arrived at essentially the same, albeit less grandiose, conclusion. As van Gennep wrote: "A man's life comes to be made up of a succession of stages with similar ends and beginnings: birth, social puberty, marriage, fatherhood, advancement to a higher class, occupational specialization, and death."[42] Both writers were responding to the demands on, or

[41] Ibid., pp. iv–v (brackets and emphasis added).

[42] Arnold van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1961), p. 3. Van Gennep published *Les rites de passage* in 1908.

more precisely, *for,* identity posed by the advent of modernity. If van Gennep's approach was theoretically universalist, Padmasusastra's was typically generalist, which leads to the second feature of the formative "Javanese" subject of *Tatacara.*

Offering a "glimpse of the character of the Javanese people," *Tatacara* inscribed a generalized subject. Of the thousands of ritual details contained in the book—of offerings appropriate, costumes suitable, prayers preferred, and so on—none is identified with a specific village; the multiple ritual specifics of village customary practices are, in fact, completely absent in the work. Indeed, even information concerning village particulars submitted to Padmasusastra during his tenure as editor of the monthly *Sasadhara* (published by Surakarta's newly founded Radyapustaka Museum) was not included in either the journal or the book.[43] Although *Tatacara* would eventually generate a more typically ethnographic discourse motivated by a new sense of cultural diversity—by 1926, "The Tatacara for Wedding in the Region of Sukawati" by R. T. Sumanagara, responding explicitly to Padmasusastra's work, was an obvious choice for publication in the journal *Pusaka Jawi* (Javanese Heirlooms)[44]—the book apparently was not written with this in mind. When Padmasusastra addressed the subject of *a* "Javanese" person and, by extension, *the* "Javanese people," he meant just that.

By the same logic, *Tatacara* did not identify itself with practices specifically associated with the Kraton Surakarta either; the discursive figure of "Java" had already become detached, as noted earlier, from a Kraton-centered order of things. Rather, the "Javanese" life inscribed in *Tatacara* was drawn more generally from the domestic practices of everyday priyayi, aspiring Surakarta "aristocrats" who soon would find Mangkunagara VII's cultural lessons and *Sidho-Madjoe*'s cataloged offerings so compelling; yet even this expanding group was not identified as such. Padmasusastra, thus, assumed a natural identity between Surakarta and "Java" just as the Surakartan dialect was selected by Javanologie officials in 1893 as the model for the standard "Javanese" language to be taught in schools. Effacing difference, identity emerged in the form of a generalizable character, a "Javanese person" (*tiyang Jawi*). With this character in place, difference could then reemerge, in the recuperated form of diversity, as so many variants that appeared to prove the rule.

[43] See, for example, the letter from one "Atmasupana" to this effect. In 1984, the letter remained uncataloged in the Radyapustaka's collection.

[44] R. T. Sumanagara, "Tatacaranipun Tiyang Mantu ing Tanah Sukawati," *Pusaka Jawi* 9 (1926): 146–51; 10 (1926): 163–70; 11 (1926): 172–74.

Drawing from his experiences as a native informant and compiler for Dutch handbooks on Javanese language usage, Padmasusastra composed *Tatacara* in a dialogical style resembling that of C. F. Winter's widely known *Javaansche Zamenspraken* (Javanese conversations). The "Javanese" life story unfolds serially through ritual episodes rendered as domestic minidramas with dialogue. While preparing for their daughter's wedding, Mr. and Mrs. Tangkilan—*Tatacara*'s everyday protagonists—are overheard, for example, engaged in the following conversation:

Mr. T: "Have you taken care of all the necessary requirements and preparations for someone about to marry off a daughter?"
Mrs. T: "Yes I have, if I haven't missed anything."
Mr. T: "What, for example?"
Mrs. T: "Offerings buried: clay pots filled with dried fish, mung beans, soybeans, macadamia nuts (long ones and flat ones), a wad of betel leaves, chicken eggs, buried in front of the inner room, near the front door, near the kitchen, and at the crossroads—with half a bottle of oil, and half a bottle of water, mixed together, to be impervious to black magic and other evil intents. Offerings distributed: clay pots, each filled with . . . [and on Mrs. Tangkilan goes, through several *pages* of lists of prepared offerings, finishing up with] boreh flowers, incense, and two cents for the 'money' part of the offering. That's all."
Mr. T: "Good, seems as if nothing's been overlooked."[45]

"Javanese" identity emerges here in the form of a trajected composite: the end product of a prolonged series of customary rites dutifully completed. The tone of moral obligation attached to ritual behavior in Mangkunagara IV's "Wedding Celebration"—"Obey the customs for wedding!"—is transposed into a domestic setting placed in a vaguely ethnographic present. Padmasusastra's story is written as if it could be taking place anytime, anywhere a good "Javanese" home exists. Even the unusual name of his exemplary family—"Tangkilan," which refers both to a variety of rice plant and a formal audience with the king—discloses a significant ambivalence concerning this family's origins, at once earthy and exalted. Depicting ritual practices neither explicitly rural, nor royal, *Tatacara* invests its identity with a kind of eternal transience, a generically "Javanese" state of being compelled to recover its own uncertain origins, always haunted by the sense that something crucial may have been forgotten.

[45] Padmasusastra, *Tatacara,* pp. 327–30 (brackets added).

This fear of the forgotten inspires much of the dialogue in *Tatacara.* No sooner does Mr. Tangkilan declare, "Good, seems as if nothing's been overlooked," than his wife is off again, running down lists of details to reassure him once more that she has not missed a thing. Such scenes of potential forgetting underscore Padmasusastra's own fears concerning a place in a world now overtaken by knowledge crowding him out. For what the author seems to have feared most was the possibility that no space would be left, that the past might no longer be recoverable except through the hands of European scholars, which is to say that his "Java" might be lost forever. Faced with this possibility, Padmasusastra rewrote "tatacara" as *Tatacara* in a manner that constantly reminds his audience of what *might* have been lost and thereby recovers that loss in the name of "Java." Through *Tatacara,* written, as it is, *as if* only a native could have done so—at one point in the introduction the author modestly notes that although "blocked by a lack of knowledge," he could, perhaps, produce something "useful"—the subject of "Java" discovers an everyday space within which to live its life.

In this spirit, *Tatacara* devotes almost half its coverage of a completed life to the wedding ritual, its preparation and execution.[46] Thus, *the* discursive scene in which "Java" emerged in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century palace manuscripts as a figure of particular cultural force, investing both kings and grooms with a new sense of authority, finds its way home in the work of Padmasusastra. As the groom's entourage is about to depart for the evening wedding at the Tangkilans' house, a conversation between the head of the entourage (*B*) and his assistant (*A*) echoes that between Jayanagara and the Huprup over one century earlier when the good Huprup was reminded that "according to Javanese rules," a groom reigns supreme. In *Tatacara:*

A: "Are we *really* permitted to parade with ceremonial parasols at night? I thought that was prohibited for anyone other than His Highness the King."
B: "That's true, and yet for a groom it is permitted; whatever befits the King is permitted."
A: "Thank goodness we are not transgressing a prohibition."
B: "Are the escorts bearing the betel box and spittoon present?"
A: "Yes, and I have provided them with appropriate costumes."
B: "And you've not forgotten the escorts' lanterns?"

[46] Of *Tatacara*'s 391 pages, 41 percent focus on the wedding.

A: "Heavens, I *have* forgotten! Servants, fetch my lanterns, immediately!"[47]

If nineteenth-century Pakubuwanas haunted by the authoritative colonial shadow of Kangjeng Gupermèn could, by becoming a groom, be treated like a king, royally, so too could everyday native grooms haunted by turn-of-the-century demands of identity now be guaranteed a place, an identifiable cultural space, by parading as a "Javanese" king. Although the initial question—"Are we *really* permitted to parade with ceremonial parasols at night?"—appears to underwrite the authority of native kings (as prohibitions assume a renewed significance), nevertheless, that authority is immediately domesticated in a fashion fit for replication. The point here is not that a long-standing custom permits grooms to perform as kings but that the very logic by which each Surakarta king became *reinvested,* under colonial conditions, as an ideal "Javanese" king is itself repeated in an individualized form.

Just as the palace of the reinvested king ritually recovered the displaced contradiction of its creation and, thus, was compelled to attempt to live up to the ever-expanding image that "Java" represented, these newly individuated figures of "Java" were constantly moved by the sense that something might have been forgotten. Suspended between two worlds of customary specifics—the Kraton on the one hand, villages on the other—the community of ritual individuals inscribed by Padmasusastra could never be sure when enough was really enough. As subjected effects of "Java," they would internalize and customarily repeat the logic of loss that had set the Kraton Surakarta in ritual motion. Such a personal form of repetition—"Heavens, I *have* forgotten!"—was both possible and compelling because the Kraton itself along with Pakubuwana X and His Highness' kingdom of "Java" was receding into the past that the age of progress was creating. It was in anticipation of this approaching past and the sense of loss it foreshadowed on the eve of the turn of the century that Padmasusastra devoted himself to *Tatacara.* "Since among our Javanese people there are, in fact, many who are *still* of one mind that adheres to superstitions, my feeling is that there may be some usefulness . . . in offering a glimpse of the character of the Javanese people." By persistently reminding his readers of what they may have forgotten, of what might, one day, even be lost, the author created a space for just such a character. In *Tatacara,* that character was discovered busy at work as a

[47] Padmasusastra, *Tatacara,* pp. 337–38.

ritual subject, repeatedly redeeming its customary identity by self-consciously *not* forgetting what might have been forgotten.

An Initial Return to Origins

By the time of the Kraton Surakarta's bicentennial celebration in April 1939, the subject of Padmasusastra's focus had indeed proven, as the author had hoped, most useful. Not only had *Tatacara* been immediately republished in 1911, it had become drawn into a vast discourse on "Javanese" customs and character, just the kind of discourse that the book now, in retrospect, seems to have announced in advance. After the publication of *Tatacara,* what might be thought of as a third growth of knowledge began to flourish and assume a life of its own, filling up the world once more. General encyclopedias, ethnographic compendia, journals, magazines, newspapers, cultural study groups, formal exhibitions, school textbooks, radio programs, and so on—some in Dutch, others in Javanese, still others in Malay—all recorded and displayed, with varying degrees of enthusiasm and through various effects, evidence on the subject of "Java."

Future ethnographers searching out instances of rites of passage would find a perfectly recognizable type referenced within an *indigenous* rhetoric of Javanese tatacara in much the same manner that nineteenth-century Dutch scholars had discovered an object of Orientalist desire already prefigured as "Java" in the palace archives and through royal ceremony. From the early 1920s on and the founding of the Java Institute, a densely articulated convergence of formal Javanological interests expressed in Dutch with similar discursive interests in "Java" expressed in Javanese or Malay ensured that the underlying subjects of these interests appeared virtually identical. Mangkunagara VII's 1932 appeal to a native geestelijk ik would be particularly persuasive because the subject of his lecture, although delivered in Dutch, had previously been introduced by a discourse on the Javanese person, the tiyang Jawi, in Javanese. An initial translation had *already* begun. It remained for the prince to expand the interior space of that subject by lifting a tip of the veil as if to reveal, for a moment, a recovered spirit. In a similar fashion, Sidho-Madjoe's cultural customers could not only easily slip into a "genuinely Javanese" suit but feel fully *comfortable* within that blancon form, with its uncanny fit, and say so by expressing themselves in the form of a testimonial letter. Even the less-comfortable, highly spirited "nationalist solution, imitating one's forefathers by not imitating them," identified by

Anderson at the beginning of this chapter assumed a "tradition" that one was (not) imitating as well as a "good Javanese" that one was trying to be by becoming a good Indonesian. Although such a nationalist might have been at odds with the character promoted by Mangkunagara VII's "Javanese nationalism," the subjects of the debate were identifiable, the terms of the conflict expressible. The implications of identity borne by cara Jawi thus extended well beyond the limits of that figure's appearance in palace archives, behind Kraton walls.

The April 1939 shift of ceremonial emphasis from king to kingdom, that is, from a celebration of Pakubuwanan rule to a novel bicentennial celebration of the "Javanese" *realm,* marked a timely convergence of two discernible, yet thoroughly interdependent, discourses on "Java," discourses that seemed to lie on each side of the palace walls. While the world outside the walls was rapidly filling up with knowledge variously but explicitly dedicated to identifying and illuminating the subject of "Java," within the palace, the reign over "Java" represented by the Pakubuwanan dynasty was fast reaching its own logical conclusion. With the portentous death of Pakubuwana X on February 20, 1939, and the attendant prophetic conclusions that the last true king had, finally, realized his fate, the Kraton's "Java" stretched outward as if to incorporate the public into a celebration of realm rather than ruler: an extensive night fair proffering a wealth of cultural attractions. Although the late king's eldest son would be installed as Pakubuwana XI on April 26 in the midst of bicentennial celebrations, this in no way detracted from the shift in ceremonial emphasis. This aging prince's accession coincided not only, of course, with the prophetic end that Pakubuwana X's death represented but, equally significantly, with a 50 percent reduction in funds allocated by the colonial government for the Kraton. That the government had waited until *this* moment to institute the long-expected reduction in financial aid simply confirmed the sense that the prophecies had been realized.

Surakartans would later recall the obvious incomparability between Pakubuwana X and his successor as continued evidence that a profound transformation in the nature of rule had transpired in 1939. A retired schoolteacher in her sixties addressed the matter quite bluntly in the early 1980s: "Pakubuwana X was a true king and he *looked* like one. But that Crown Prince [Pakubuwana XI, whom the woman still referred to, with a tone of indignation, as 'that Crown Prince' instead of 'King'] looked as if he had no strength at all. And he didn't. A couple of years later Japan marched right in." In retrospect it seemed that even Japan would not have dared invade Java had Pakubuwana X still ruled. Under the shadow

of awareness that a seismic shift in the status of the "Axis of the Cosmos" was in process—whether rendered, *in 1939*, prophetically or financially, although prophecy would not have recognized this distinction—the bicentennial celebration encompassed and subsumed an event that in earlier days would have demanded a celebration unto itself, the coronation of a king. The focus of the Kraton's "Java" thus shifted away from an essentially vacated throne and became projected, with great ceremony, beyond palace walls.

Commemorating its own origins in the form of a bicentennial at the very moment when it was being drained of dynastic power, the palace represented itself as an ideal trace of much that might be recalled as authentically "Javanese." The passing of Pakubuwana X and the obviously ill-fated (or simply nonfated) appearance of his successor, reaffirmed the sense that at one time, a real Axis of the Cosmos indeed had existed, a true king, and that time was now located in the past. What remained was a cosmically abandoned palace whose imposing walls seemed to contain the authority of the past, that is, to consign real authority to the past while extending to late-colonial Surakartans concerned with articulating a "Javanese" identity, a tangible sense of origins, a sense of past *in place*. Hence, the emergence of a Pakubuwana XI (and after him, a Pakubuwana XII) appeared to many of the late-colonial generation as critically inappropriate, as uncannily out of place, given the Kraton's potential as a trace of the past. Conceived as if to counter this inappropriateness, the bicentennial reconfigured the Kraton as a site of origins celebrated rather than rule perpetuated.

To this end, the bicentennial committee published, as noted at the beginning of Chapter 1, a two-hundred page commemorative volume that featured the royal progress of 1745: "Royal Deeds." Although the details of this progress were extracted from the mid-to-late eighteenth-century "Giyanti History," the multivolume chronicle covering the years 1743—57 and the events surrounding the end of Kartasura and the beginnings of Surakarta, in "Royal Deeds" the progress itself is isolated and enframed as a scene, *the* scene, of original significance.[48] It was

[48] The extracting and enframing of this scene from *Babad Giyanti* seems to have been, understandably, an early twentieth-century move, appearing just at the time when the discourse on customs, identity, and origins was emerging. I know of no nineteenth-century text that isolates the 1745 progress in this way. Although the 1924 *Babad Sangkala* (quoted in Chap. 1) began to fill in what it imagined as the details of the progress by adorning the royal entourage in bridal attire, it was not until the widely circulated commemorative volume of 1939 that this reinscribed scene of origins was really highlighted. I am indebted to Nancy Florida for her textual advice here.

precisely in light of the heightened, extracted significance attached to the 1745 progress in the 1939 volume that I began with this virtual moment, a historiographical point suspended between the year recalled and the year of its recalling. My initial interest lay not so much in recovering origins but in retracing a discourse on origins recovered.

Thus, when I turned to passages in a late eighteenth-century manuscript depicting the move to Surakarta, I did so not because that move presented itself as a natural point of departure—another point might very well have been drawn from earlier sections in the chronicles detailing the dissolution of Kartasura—but because those were passages highlighted in a particularly privileged manner by "Royal Deeds." That is, by 1939, it was as if the fine details of the ceremonial procession that ended in Surakarta represented all that one really needed to know about Surakarta history. Focusing on a scene of origins in which Pakubuwana II was rescued from retreat within the rhetoric of a royal progress—a progress that, quoted out of context, recovered the contradiction of the Kraton Surakarta's creation—the 1939 volume, along with the event, ceremoniously *reiterated* the conditions of that creative contradiction in the form of a bicentennial celebration held at the very moment, as just noted, when the palace was being drained of dynastic power. In doing so, the celebration recognized in Surakarta a particularly well-endowed site for recovering "Java"'s past: a place immensely capable of discovering its own origins by repeating them. This should, in turn, remind one that the precise point of departure was located in neither the precolonial past of Dutch East India Company days nor the past of late-colonial Surakarta but in the postcolonial present of New Order rule. For this is a present administered by a regime of knowledge as dedicated to identifying and enframing the subject of "Java" as it is obsessed with recovering its origins from the past that Surakarta now represents.

4

Origins Revisited

A Circuitous Return to the Present

Writing in the mid-1950s, a retired Javanese colonial official sifted through his recollections associated with Solo. He came up with the following information about where the divine radiance that descends, prophetically, to identify a new ruler and realm, the *wahyu,* landed as it migrated from Kartasura to Surakarta in 1745:

> The spot directly in line with where the wahyu fell was right in front of the "klinik"—the hospital—Kadipala just to the north of the road leading out to the Flower Market in Laweyan. In 1918, the place used by that wahyu when it fell was still known to the public because on that spot was built a Kupel—a pavilion for Western music—and the yard around the Kupel was used for storing teak lumber belonging to a Chinese man named Jap Kam Mlok.[1]

By the 1950s, Surakarta's privileged past lay buried beneath decades of events whose archaeological significance appeared almost haphazardly juxtaposed: a wahyu in front of a colonial health clinic, beneath a Dutch music pavilion, surrounded by a Chinese lumberyard.

The city of Solo was the residual product not only of colonial-era

[1] R. M. Ng. Tiknopranoto, *Sekar Wijaya Kusuma* (Surakarta: Pelajar, n.d.), p. 27.

transformations but of highly significant developments in the 1940s as well. The decade of the 1940s, as I noted in the Introduction, ushered in changes that profoundly altered the long-established cultural order, first in the form of the Japanese occupation and soon thereafter the Indonesian national revolution. For many Surakartans, the events of the 1940s confirmed old prophecies that Pakubuwana X was destined to become the city's last "real" king. The following 1980s recollections of a retired Solonese schoolteacher reveal the remarkable suddenness with which her Surakartan world changed under the Japanese:

> The effects of the Japanese occupation were drastic. Dutch officials disappeared. Everyone was ordered to use Indonesian and call one another "brother" [*saudara*] and the Japanese "older brother" [*saudara tua*]. Suddenly new primary schools appeared. One for boys and one for girls near the Pasar Legi market, and another for boys in the old Mangkunagaran Legion barracks. Going to school was like a drill. Children walked out of their neighborhoods and immediately stepped into line on the streets, a long *barisan* [marching line] headed for school. There were barisan everywhere—of soldiers, civil servants, and children. Food and clothing became scarce. Metal was collected by the Japanese, too, not just gold but even the iron fences around houses—gone! Petty sellers appeared on street corners hawking used clothes and clothes made from old burlap bags. It all happened so fast.

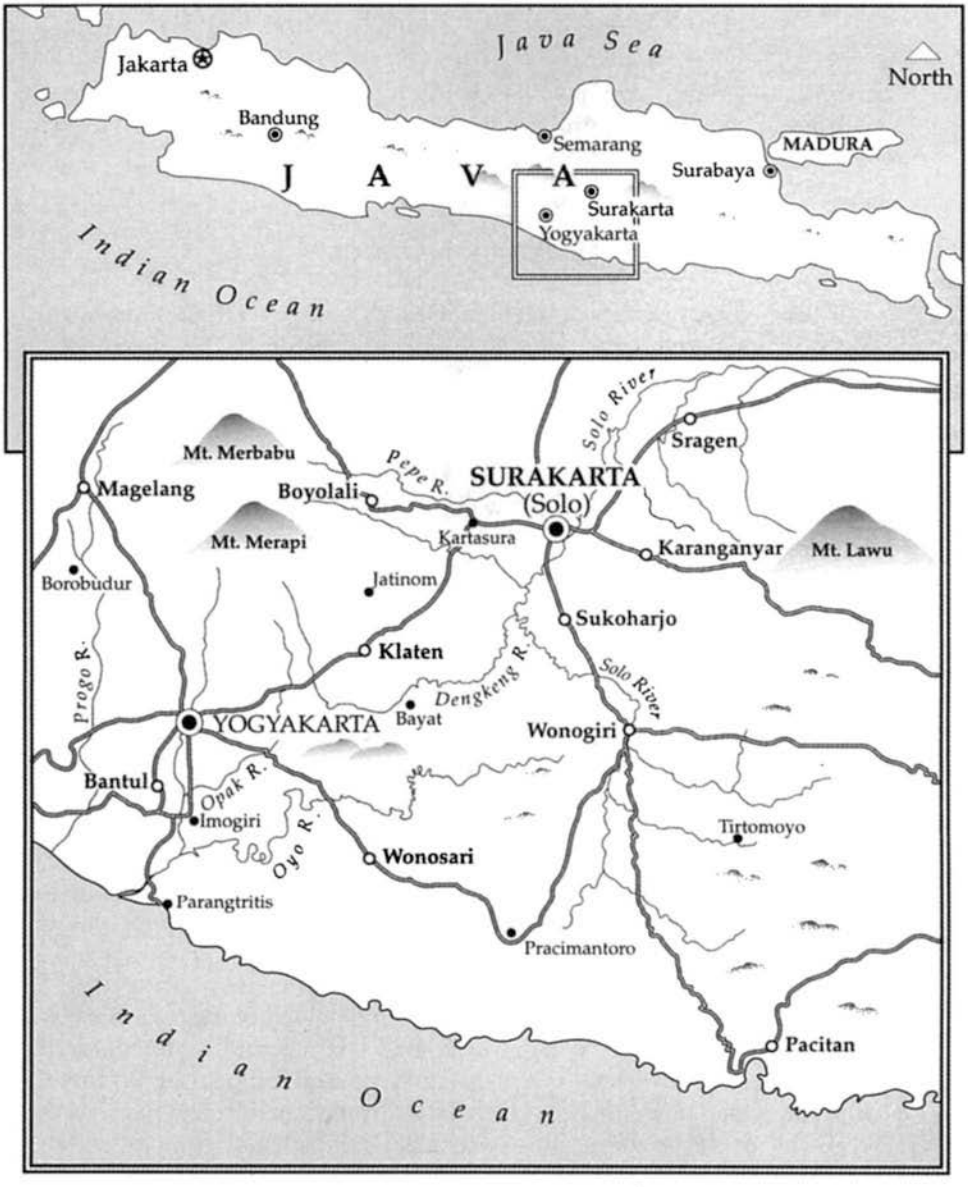
The woman went on to describe her experiences during the revolution when she had helped as an emergency nurse on the front lines in Surabaya. "Later we hid out in a village south of Mt. Lawu. The people there were really supportive." Although her accounts of the occupation years and the years that immediately followed Indonesia's declaration of independence were frequently interrupted with fond memories of the late colonial era world—"the Kraton princesses were so beautiful back then," "the streets were very clean," or "you knew who people were simply by the clothing they wore"—the thought of somehow returning to a world like that was out of the question. "We were moving toward something else," she concluded. As newly independent Indonesia of the early 1950s headed toward what many envisioned as a wholly "modern" (modérn) era, the recollected world of prewar Surakarta assumed an odd aura of appropriateness, a place of its own in a certain past never again to be repeated. Upon the remnants of colonial-era constructions and the debris of 1940s developments—including Pakubuwana XII's timely failure to provide support for the revolution—was imagined another Surakarta somehow independent of the implications of its past. Although

retired Javanese colonial officials might sift through recollections in search of spent wahyu, for most Solonese, the rise and fall of the significant radiance that once illuminated the realm of Surakarta was now completely behind them.

In light of the events informing the years 1942–66, it is not surprising that the Surakartan palaces found little, if anything, to celebrate. When Princess Siti Nurul, daughter of Mangkunagara VII, received a royal wedding at the Mangkunagaran in 1951, even Javanese magazines devoted to cultural coverage cartooned the affair by depicting a provocative, batik-clad princess bathing in Solo River waters while an "antifeudal" protester, enthralled by such a scene, climbed over a fence into the "profeudal" camp.[2] The palaces remained nearly inactive until the early 1970s when, encouraged by New Order visions of what would come to be thought of as cultural "renaissance" (*renaissance*), they suddenly reemerged as site of origins for recalling the authority of "Java." Within half a decade after the cataclysmic events of 1965–66 that ushered in General Soeharto's rise to power, President and Mrs. Soeharto would turn explicitly to "culture" (*kebudayaan*) as a point of reference that might override the terror of the New Order's own origins by appearing to resecure customs from a more distant past in the post-1965 present.

In Chapters 5 through 7, I examine in detail the effects of New Order cultural discourse within everyday practices now identified as "traditional" and, thus, necessarily return, repeatedly, to recollections of pre-1965 times for signs of a difference that might lie beyond the recuperative power of New Order diversity. In this chapter, I anticipate these effects by examining two scenes of origins. The first emerges with the construction of the "Beautiful Indonesia" cultural theme park noted earlier in the Introduction, the second, with New Order attempts to reconstruct the Kraton Surakarta. The specific histories contained by these two scenes are, in fact, so thoroughly entwined that to treat them separately, or even sequentially, would mean overlooking the possibility that searches for origins must always look elsewhere, that is, that origins are recalled as that which is not present, not quite. This chapter thus moves back and forth between "Beautiful Indonesia" and the Kraton Surakarta in a persistent attempt to recall what one or the other is not. To explore a critical distance between the two is to reveal a certain gap between post-1965 postcolonial recuperations of the past and colonial-era prefigurations of the future, a gap within the otherwise seemingly continuous cultural

[2] *Djojobojo*, April 7, 1951, p. 8. The Nurul wedding was the only postindependence royal wedding held in Solo before 1970.



Map 2. Java and the Central Javanese heartland.

presence of a figure like "Java" itself. Yet it is also to reveal why it is that such a gap must be continuously recovered as origins themselves are reclaimed.

The Appearance of "Beautiful Indonesia"

In June 1971, just before the New Order's first general election, hundreds of inhabitants from several neighborhoods on the southern outskirts of Jakarta sought help from the Legal Aid Institute (Lembaga Bantuan Hukum) for reasons that had little to do with elections. Their homes were to be razed and their land—approximately one hundred hectares in all—sold to Mrs. Soeharto's Our Hope Foundation (Yayasan Harapan Kita) at prices well below market value.[3] On this land would be built the First Lady's dream cultural center called Taman Mini "Indonesia Indah," "Beautiful Indonesia"-in-Miniature Park.

In late August, Mrs. Soeharto published an official rationale for the cultural park's proposed design and purpose. Opening with the patriotic salutation "Freedom!" the First Lady described a sudden inspiration she had during her recent visit to Disneyland, "I was inspired to build a Project of that sort in Indonesia, only more complete [lengkap] and more perfect, adapted to fit the situation and developments in Indonesia, both 'materially' [*materiil*] and 'spiritually' [*spirituil*]."[4] The centerpiece of "Beautiful Indonesia"-in-Miniature Park, or Mini, as the park came to be called, was to be an 8.4 hectare pond with little islands representing the archipelago. Mini would also include "ancient monuments," representative religious buildings, a one-thousand-room hotel and shopping center (of "international standards"), recreation facilities, an artificial waterfall, a revolving theater, and an immense outdoor performance arena. Particular importance and one hectare each would be given twenty-six display houses representing the "genuine customary architectural style" of each of Indonesia's provinces. A central audience hall of Central Javanese aristocratic design would be used for large "traditional" ceremonies. And all of this could be appreciated in its Mini completeness from an aerial

[3] *Tempo*, June 5, 1971, pp. 5–6.

[4] *Pendjelasan Tentang Projek Miniatur Indonesia "Indonesia Indah"* (Djakarta: Badan Pelaksana Pembangunan dan Persiapan Pengusahaan Projek Miniatur Indonesia "Indonesia Indah," 1971), p. 3. Mrs. Soeharto's account of how she was "inspired" (*diilhami*) with the "Beautiful Indonesia" Project concept appeals to a sense of divine inspiration and blessed mission.

cable car. Thus was born the "Beautiful Indonesia" Project, a project immediately set apart both "spiritually and materially" from other more down-to-earth Indonesian development efforts. The quotation marks surrounding "Beautiful Indonesia" created an "as if" sense of an idealized Indonesia, a perfectly cultural representation viewed by the logic of miniaturization as if from a distance.

Yet such a view was not shared by all those of the 1966 generation that had supported the removal of President Sukarno and establishment of Soeharto's New Order government. For on December 16, 1971, a delegation from the newly formed Economizing Movement (Gerakan Penghematan) entered a "Project Miniature Protest" to the National Planning Development Board.[5] The proposed ten and one-half billion rupiah project (twenty-five million dollars U.S. in 1971) was criticized as a grossly luxurious use of funds that could be better spent on either fifty-two small industries (employing one hundred workers each) or seven large university campuses the size of the prestigious Gajah Mada University. Mrs. Soeharto's response was: "Whatever happens, I won't retreat an inch! This project must go through!"[6] Within days, the anti-Mini movement spread to other cities; in Bandung, it became the Sound Mind Movement (Gerakan Akal Sehat). On December 23, a large assembly calling itself the Savior of the People's Money Movement (Gerakan Penjelamat Uang Rakjat) marched directly on Mrs. Soeharto's Our Hope Foundation headquarters in downtown Jakarta where army rifles left four marchers seriously wounded.[7] Soon thereafter, President Soeharto himself brought a quick end to all Sound Minds and Saviors: "Quite frankly, I'll deal with them! No matter who they are! Anyone who refuses to understand this warning, frankly I'll deal with them!"[8]

Indeed. On April 20, 1975, International Women's Day, headlines declared "Dream Becomes Reality" as Mrs. Soeharto dedicated the newly constructed "Beautiful Indonesia."[9] Embodying the kind of international stature Mini was intended to produce, Imelda Marcos was conspicuously present for the opening ceremonies. "Dear God, our Lord, with the intention to build up our people's and nation's love for the Fatherland did

[5] See *Sinar Harapan,* December 16, 1971.

[6] As translated by Benedict Anderson in "Notes on Contemporary Indonesian Political Communication," *Indonesia* 16 (1973): 65.

[7] *Sinar Harapan,* December 23, 1971.

[8] As translated by Anderson in "Notes on Contemporary Indonesian Political Communication," p. 65.

[9] "Impian Menjadi Kenyataan: Taman Miniatur Indonesia Indah," *Skets Masa* 3 (1975): 4.

we build this 'Beautiful Indonesia'-in-Miniature Park," prayed the Minister of Religious Affairs.[10]

Addressing the dedication ceremonies, Mrs. Soeharto stressed the idea of a cultural inheritance (warisan kebudayaan), a quasi-spiritual form of inheritance which, if left unguarded, might be destroyed by the lowly, purely material demands of a developing people.[11] The First Lady had not forgotten her confrontation with the Saviors of the People's Money. President Soeharto's address expanded on this idea:

> Economic development alone is not enough. Life will not have a beautiful and deep meaning with material sufficiency only, however abundant that sufficiency might become. On the contrary, pursuit of material things only will make life cruel and painful. . . . One's life, therefore, will be calm and complete only when it is accompanied by spiritual welfare.
>
> The direction and guidance toward that spiritual welfare is, in fact, already in our possession; it lies in our beautiful and noble national cultural inheritance.
>
> . . .
>
> We need "Mulat Sarira Hangrasa Wani"—the courage of self-introspection—to ask whether we really have done or contributed anything to help perfect and enhance this "Beautiful Indonesia"-in-Miniature Park: a Park that depicts Our People, a Park that makes us proud to be Indonesians, a Park that we will bequeath to future generations.[12]

Drawing on the distinction between material and spiritual welfare (a well-known Javanese mystical formulation elaborating on European philosophical discourse and often cited on behalf of New Order policy), Soeharto reminded his listeners that material prosperity alone is not enough, no matter how affluent one may be. (Given his own financial pursuits, however, the president obviously did not intend that personal material matters be totally ignored.) What one needs is something spiritual, something which, as luck would have it, is "already in our *possession,*" a cultural inheritance. For the Soehartos, "spiritual" assumed a remarkably materialistic feel, the result of a direct exchange of material wealth for cultural wealth. Indeed, an exchange of just this sort was

[10] *Kenang-kenangan Peresmian Pembukaan Taman Mini Indonesia Indah* (Jakarta: BP5 Taman Mini "Indonesia Indah," 1975), p. 70.

[11] Ibid., p. 45.

[12] Ibid., pp. 62–63 and 65. "Mulat Sarira Hangrasa Wani" is a Mangkunagaran motto.

ceremoniously acted out at one point in the dedication ceremonies as the Soehartos sold mounted sets of "Beautiful Indonesia" Commemorative Coins to obliging regional administrators. The coins purportedly represented a ritual transfer of something material for something spiritual, shiny tokens of a vast cultural wealth. Acts of transfer and surrender (*penyerahan*) were, in fact, central to the dedication of Mini and the conversion to a spiritual-cultural economy that the culture park was designed to represent. During the several weeks preceding the April 20 ceremony, a series of such acts occurred, including the "Official Transfer of the Regional Customary Exhibition Houses" when each of the governors ceremoniously surrendered to Mrs. Soeharto the "traditional" regional pavilion of his province. At the dedication proper, Mrs. Soeharto then presented a document, "The Declaration of Transfer of 'Beautiful Indonesia'-in-Miniature Park from the Our Hope Foundation to the Republic of Indonesia," and all of Mini, to President Soeharto.

With the founding of "Beautiful Indonesia," Bapak (Father) and Ibu (Mother) Soeharto assumed the roles of model parents of an extended national family, privileged benefactors of an extensive inheritance. Displacing economic concerns with a patently "cultural" gift, this novel inheritance offered Indonesians a bequest they apparently could not afford to refuse. Built into the logic of such a bequest was a transference of culture that erased the difference between past, present, and future, and thus flattened time—and, with it, histories, including the extraordinary violence of the New Order's own origins—into a continuously presented present. For "Beautiful Indonesia" was founded upon a peculiar sense of temporality.

The obsession with connecting the past and future in the form of a present finds prolific expression at Mini through numerous so-called monuments (*monumen*): miniature replicas of ancient monuments (*candhi*), memorial monuments (*tugu*), and commemorative inscriptions (*prasasti*). Discussing monumental styles in postindependence Indonesia, Benedict Anderson has noted that the realist figure of Jakarta's Liberation of West Irian Monument "symbolizes directly the liberation of the Irianese from Dutch colonial rule."[13] Although this Sukarno-era monument is modern in form, it points to the past and a specific *event,* which recalls, in turn, a shared vision of the future and works by a logic common to traditional monuments: "they face two ways in time. Normally they commemorate events or experiences in the past, but, at the same

[13] Anderson, "Notes on Contemporary Indonesian Political Communication," p. 63.

time, they are intended, in their all-weather durability, for future posterity."[14] In contrast to the Irian Monument, the Sukarno-era National Monument (Monas) looks somewhat traditional in style with its lingga-yoni form but, as Anderson argues, does not actually recall an event and, thus, represents a very different sort of relation with the past. "The lingga-yoni in Medan Merdeka [Jakarta's Independence Square] means nothing in itself, but is rather a sign for 'continuity'."[15]

The New Order monuments at Mini project something akin to this appeal to continuity and at the same time disclose an appeal all their own. For not only do Mini's monuments *not* face two ways in time, they appear to efface pasts and futures altogether. A Department of Culture and Education storybook account of a visit to Mini (designed for use in public schools as an introduction to Indonesian culture) provides a suggestive guide here.[16] The story's protagonist, a Central Javanese child named Mustafa, watches a television show with representative singers and houses from Sumatra and wonders: "'When will I get to see those regional houses in their original [asli] settings?' . . . 'Go to Mini, whatever you desire will be fulfilled!' was the answer Mustafa received from the depths of his own heart."[17] Mustafa forms a student group, finds an adult leader, and within months is able to fulfill his desire: a trip to "Beautiful Indonesia." Upon arriving at Mini, the students sight the park's obeliskoid relative of Jakarta's famed National Monument:

> "Oh, this monument's so tall! Is this the one called the National Monument [Monas]?" asked Dika.
>
> "No, this is the one called the Fire of Pancasila Monument [Tugu Api Pancasila]. It is 45 meters tall, 17 meters in circumference, and its base pillars are 8 meters long," said [the teacher] Abdulah.
>
> "Oooh, a sacred number [*angka kramat*] for Indonesians! 17, 8, 45.
>
> "And the pictures on the base make the Pancasila Symbol [*Lambang*]!" shouted Dika.[18]

While Jakarta's National Monument stands as a sign for continuity, Mini's Fire of Pancasila Monument—built to resemble the National Monument yet represent something else—stands as a redoubled repre-

[14] Ibid., p. 61.

[15] Ibid., p. 63.

[16] S. W. Siswoyo, *Kunjungan ke Taman Mini Indonesia Indah* (Jakarta: Ikhwan [for the Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan], 1978).

[17] Ibid., pp. 11–12.

[18] Ibid., p. 27.

sentation, a *sign of a sign* for continuity. The measurements say "17-8-45" but this does not really designate a date, much less recall events associated with the canonized August 17, 1945, the moment when Indonesian independence was declared. Represented instead is a number, an ahistoricized point of reference. Little Dika learns to decipher the monument's form and shouts out *not* "Revolution!" but first, "Oooh, a sacred number," and ultimately, "*Symbol!*"

"Beautiful Indonesia"'s special ahistoricism and concomitant passion for form emerges, instructively, in another episode from Mustafa's fairy-tale visit. The scene is Mini's Borobudur Monument, a two-by-two meter Borobudur under glass, resting dead center in a relatively modest open air pavilion surrounded, in turn, by eight life-size concrete Buddhas.

> "Only now am I able to clearly understand the Borobudur," said Lina, "because up until now I've just seen its photograph."
>
> "With a 'miniature' [*miniatur*] like this, we can see it in its entirety more clearly. If we went to the Borobudur, what would be visible would certainly be larger, the reliefs clear. But as to which door we entered, sometimes we'd get confused" [instructs the teacher].[19]

Mini's Borobudur presumably would refer to some other place (Central Java's Borobudur near the town of Magelang) and another time (the ninth century, perhaps) and operate by a referential logic similar to that of the National Monument: a sign for continuity. But as the teacher carefully reveals, the Mini monument exceeds its potentially *confusing* Central Javanese counterpart by enabling one to see Borobudur in its entirety, its very completeness. The greatest of Central Javanese antiquities is thus converted to a sort of Maxi-Borobudur—a cumbersome version of "Borobudur"-ness. Appearing to reverse the distinctive relationship between replica and original, "Beautiful Indonesia" monuments stand, it would seem, as the displacement of the distinction itself. That is, origins are presented as recovered in a form so totally unconfusing, so endowed with an abstracted miniaturized clarity, that the distance between what represents and what is represented, in effect, collapses.

Such effects of Mini's continuous projection of recovered origins and timeless traditions reemerge most conspicuously in the culture park's twenty-six so-called customary houses (*rumah adat*), exhibition pavilions representing each of Indonesia's twenty-six provinces (before the annexation of East Timor). For the formal dedication of Mini in 1975, twenty-

[19] Ibid., pp. 143–44.

six governors attended, each attired in the "customary regional costume" of his administrative territory regardless of his actual, most often *Javanese,* ethnic background. An East Javanese "New Guinean" governor with a fur crown and large ornamental nose bone, sat, exemplifying diversity, alongside his fellow regional representatives.[20] Just after the ceremony, the Indonesian magazine *Skets Masa* ran a cover story featuring the pavilions, at that time the park's main attraction. In the caption to a photo of the Central Java pavilion filled with visitors, one reads: "'Javanese' [*"wong Jawa"*] are proud and stream into the Central Java pavilion."[21] One has no way of knowing, of course, if the people in the photo are from Central Java. But the caption reverses the relationship; whoever appears next to this pavilion *must* be Javanese. Indeed, they are "'wong Jawa'"—this Indonesian language magazine uses the Javanese term—hence "Javanese," ambulatory emblems of ethnicity surrounded by the same quotation marks that enframe "Beautiful Indonesia."

In "Yogyakarta," the implications of displaced origins are brought home: "This is the Yogyakarta pavilion which represents the Yogya Palace in a 'little' form [*bentuk 'kecil'*]. For those who are originally from the Yogyanese palace city, entering this 'Palace' creates the sensation of returning home."[22] The quotation marked "little" recalls, again, the Mini-Borobudur logic and suggests "palace"-ness with little and big versions. Here, as it were, the real attraction is that the visitor experience the sensation of returning home. Although such a feeling might seem odd for most Javanese visiting this pavilion—visitors who could scarcely call a palace home—upon entering the miniature palace, they enjoy the sensation of home that "Beautiful Indonesia" would represent. For this is a sensation of "palace"-ness unencumbered by confusing genealogy, a sensation continuously augmented, in fact, by appropriate refinements in protocol. By 1982, for example, taking photographs was strictly prohibited inside Mini's "Yogyakarta," which had come to be treated by Mini officials as "sacred" (*kramat*). Visitors touring Central Java's Palace of Yogyakarta, by contrast, could take snapshots with relative (un-"palace"-like) impunity.

Presented as temporarily inhabitable customary spaces which might exceed the conditions of simulacra and originals, Mini's regional pavilions would create the sensation of a virtual absence of distance between

[20] The Javanese "New Guinean" with the ornamental nose bone was General Sutran, former Bupati of Trenggalek.

[21] "Impian Menjadi Kenyataan," p. 6.

[22] Ibid., p. 7.

palace and "palace," between home and "home." In "Irian Jaya," representing Indonesian New Guinea, the nation's province farthest removed from Jakarta: "Roundtrip airfare from Irian Jaya costs 150,000 rupiah. If you travel by boat, only after one month will you arrive. Thus, to relieve your longing for your homeland, just go to Mini along with your brothers from this eastern province."[23] Longing for one's homeland would be relieved as "home" itself is reconfigured in manageable terms, for such relief entails a partial forgetting of the locus of one's longing. To my initial astonishment, Central Javanese residing in Jakarta often advised me (from 1975 and "Beautiful Indonesia"'s opening well into the 1980s) to, as the phrase goes, "just go to Mini" if I sought an authentic (asli) experience of Javanese culture. "We go there regularly," one Solonese couple asserted with peculiar sincerity, "it's much less complicated than going back to Central Java." Recalling what is absent in the form of origins recovered—"Central Java," "Yogyakarta," "Irian Jaya"—thus motivates, for some at least, repeated visits to "Beautiful Indonesia."

But there is a supplemental effect to this logic of relieved longing. For these recollections of origins disclose, in turn, the sense of a site elsewhere, a site possibly *not* visited by visiting Mini. This sense appears particularly acute for "Beautiful Indonesia"'s dominant supporters, primarily Central Javanese elite now living in Jakarta, and emerges unmistakably in the one unavoidable exception to Mini's miniaturized format: the central audience hall dubbed, in *Javanese* rather than Indonesian, the "Grand Place-of-Importance Audience Hall" (Pendopo Agung Sasono Utomo). The immense pavilion is an exaggeration of Central Javanese aristocratic house design. Its roof, the real focus of Javanese architectural attention, extends almost straight up rather than gently out and gives the potentially intimidating impression of uncontrolled growth. "That Audience Hall at Mini is too tall for its own authority—grand, but not truly great [*ageng ning ora agung*]," a skeptical Solonese librarian noted to me.

In accordance with Mrs. Soeharto's plans, the hall was designed in a "Central Javanese architectural style . . . strong enough to last hundreds of years without losing its beauty or authenticity [*keaslian*]."[24] Although one might expect that over the years such a hall would *gain* an aura of authenticity, a sort of cultural patina, the First Lady assumed the opposite, a possible loss of authenticity over time. Within this framework, authenticity does not accrue but, on the contrary, must be built in as a unique quality that will survive through time, in spite of time, so long as

[23] Ibid., p. 8.
[24] *Pendjelasan Tentang Projek Miniatur Indonesia,* p. 6.

the building stands.[25] For the Audience Hall is founded upon a temporality in which change, any change at all, is detrimental. Here, time is not simply effaced (as is the case with Mini's monuments) but instead self-consciously opposed with a construction built to last hundreds of years, a construction always already "authentic."

Moving toward the Audience Hall one confronts the Indonesia Portal (Gapura Indonesia), an entrance normally kept locked, as the guidebook explains, yet opening for grand rituals (*upacara-upacara kebesaran*).[26] Such was the case during the 1975 dedication of Mini when guests paraded through the Indonesia Portal on their way to the Audience Hall and observed mass folk dances on the frontal plaza, the so-called Pancasila Royal Plaza, or Alun-alun Pancasila—*pancasila* referring to the Republic of Indonesia's Five Principles, and *alun-alun* recalling royal plazas of the sort that faces the Kraton Surakarta. Lest the resonances of royal apsirations be lost on those attending "Beautiful Indonesia"'s dedication, an offering was made on ritual behalf of the Audience Hall with Imelda Marcos planting a banyan tree—*the* emblem for Javanese royalty as well as the logo for the New Order's dominant political organization Golkar—in Mrs. Soeharto's orchid garden at Mini. For the dedication ceremony, the commemorative album recorded: "Praise be to God Almighty, on Sunday, April 20, 1975, the performance of the Official Opening Ceremony for the 'Beautiful Indonesia' Mini Park went well—safely, in good order, and in an atmosphere that was cheerful yet reverent and exalted. . . . With God Almighty's help and blessing, the weather on April 20 was fine."[27]

Not unlike the founding of the Kraton Surakarta 230 years earlier when banyan trees were ceremoniously planted and all was "in good order," the founding of the Grand Place-of-Importance Audience Hall at Mini circumvented the implications of the past by reclaiming the past in the form of built-in authenticity. The procession of 1745 recalled the royal progress to perform as a sign of what the procession was not; the dedication of an oversized Audience Hall elaborated on that contradiction with its reference to origins. The hall lay at the heart of "Beautiful Indonesia"'s logic of authenticity and, in its very "palace"-ness recalled not only what the grand hall may be but what it is not, a palace else-

[25] The logic here parallels Mrs. Soeharto's response to Mini's critics: "The timing of its construction is also just right—*so long as I'm alive.*" From Anderson, "Notes on Contemporary Indonesian Political Communication," p. 65.

[26] *Pendjelasan Tentang Projek Miniatur Indonesia*, p. 6. Gapura portals are associated with royal facades.

[27] *Kenang-kenangan Peresmian*, p. 20.

where. As noted earlier, Jakarta's Javanese elite imagine Central Java's palaces to contain a wealth of all that is authentic, be it material (heirlooms) or spiritual (ceremony). With its exaggerated roof and durability of design, the Audience Hall would, perhaps, escape the quotation marks around "Beautiful Indonesia" by establishing itself as an original source, a cultural center of reference for future generations, the new locus of a cultural inheritance. Yet, despite the fact that the weather on April 20, 1975, was fine, the founders of "Beautiful Indonesia"'s Audience Hall would be haunted precisely by their own originality.

Something Missing 1
Heirlooms, Mausoleums, Museums

Coinciding with the recalling of "tradition" under New Order conditions of the early 1970s was a timely resurgence of palace customs in the Kraton Surakarta. This coincidence was facilitated by the fact that Pakubuwana XII's oldest daughter had reached marriageable age. On June 7, 1970, the Kraton hosted its first royal wedding ceremony in postindependence Indonesian history. Princess Koes Ondowijah was wedded to Irawan Kadiman, a man of relatively common status. Unlike the 1951 Mangkunagaran wedding, the 1970 Kraton event received coverage that was wholly favorable.

> Changing times seem to have changed the tradition that the royal bride must submit to the absolute authority of her parents and take a husband from aristocratic circles; now she can freely choose her life-mate. *But the grandeur of the wedding ceremony conducted in accordance with palace regulations, in accordance with the customs of each "royal house"* [vorsten huis, (*sic*)], *is still respected and authenticity* [keaslian] *is carried on.*[28]

Two years later, the wedding of another princess provided the occasion for yet a grander show of palace tradition. Betrothed to Reinout Sylvanus, governor of Central Kalimantan, Princess Koes Soepiyah enjoyed a lavish forty-million rupiah Kraton wedding attended by twenty-five hundred privileged guests, including President Soeharto himself. To as-

[28] S. Suhari, "Upatjara Mantu Karaton Surakarta," *Relung Pustaka* (August 1970): 13 (emphasis added). (Kadiman was, in fact, chosen for the princess.) Just months earlier, the Kraton Yogyakarta had held its first postcolonial wedding.

sure authenticity, the groom received what the press referred to as a "crash course in tatacara and ritual behavior."[29] For their part, Pakubuwana XII and the other three Central Javanese "traditional" rulers waited at palace gates and received President Soeharto by essentially the same discreet rules of etiquette that had guided colonial-era Pakubuwanas welcoming visiting governors-general.[30]

The Kraton's luster was further enhanced in the early 1970s by the palace's unique ritual observance of the Javanese New Year. On the eve of Sura, the first month of the Javanese year, the Kraton held its annual "Heirloom Parade" (Kirab Pusaka), an eerie nocturnal procession of empowered daggerlike kerisses and lances selected from the palace's legendary arsenal of sacred heirlooms. By Javanese calendrical reckoning, this is the most magically charged night of the year. Just after midnight, palace doors open, releasing a lengthy procession of ceremonial parasols, archaic oil lanterns, offerings of flower petals, clouds of incense, and palace servants, all accompanying members of the royal family charged with the ritual duty of carrying heirloom weapons. Lumbering along at the head of the procession is Sir Slamet, the Kraton's albino water buffalo endowed with supernatural powers. The silent show of power slowly makes its way through central Solo's main streets as it circumambulates the outermost walls of the Kraton. Some three hours later, the procession finally reaches its point of departure and returns once more within the palace proper.

All along the designated route, crowds quietly await the procession's passing; some spectators perform gestures of obeisance and respect as heirlooms pass by. Older women in the crowd occasionally scoop up blessings in the form of Sir Slamet's droppings and stuff them into plastic bags, for the feces of this water buffalo are said to contain curative and fecundative powers. Stories concerning the powers of Sir Slamet as well as the Kraton heirlooms abound in Solo. During the 1981 Heirloom Parade, for example, a young prince carrying a notoriously powerful palace keris was suddenly seized by an urgent need to defecate and dashed into a house near the procession's route. Having relieved himself he returned safely to the procession; within months, however, the house proved unable to withstand this unsolicited deposit of power and collapsed.

[29] *Mekar Sari,* July 1, 1973, p. 4.

[30] By 1982, the wedding of the Kraton prince G. R. M. Soerjo Soetedjo (the only prince to have graduated from the Academy of the Indonesian Armed Forces) represented a "tradition" that had become thoroughly routine.

The air of solemnity that reigns at the Kraton's New Year's Eve procession is striking in contemporary Solo where self-restrained crowds are unusual. This solemnity is particularly remarkable, however, in light of the Heirloom Parade's brief history as palace ritual. Conceived in 1971 by senior palace officials purportedly at the suggestion of Soedjono Humardhani (at the time, inspector-general of Development and a close friend of the Soehartos), the Heirloom Parade has flourished ever since.[31] (By 1976 when I first witnessed the event, villagers who had traveled to Solo in search of Suran blessings assured me that this procession had occurred annually "since the old days.") Although the palace performed the New Year's procession as a reiteration of traditions past, the Heirloom Parade was, in fact, most novel. Court manuscripts from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries reveal that circumambulation of the palace with heirloom weapons was extremely rare and occurred only in times of acute crisis owing to epidemic illness and famine, times with no connection to Sura.[32] The inherently bizarre (though not entirely inappropriate) implications of an *annual* Heirloom Parade—that the royal realm is in a perpetual state of crisis—thus are ritually bypassed on behalf of "tradition."

A 1972 explanatory brochure designed to highlight the significance of the Heirloom Parade observance sums up the scene this way: "The Kraton is a source for slamet and prosperity. As a center of the cosmos [*kosmos*] and universe, its magical power is able to radiate out to all the people by means of sacred [*sakral*] rituals, the magical power of the king stored within the heirlooms."[33] The power of radiation attributed to this observance is not, however, as direct as this explanation would suggest. The heirlooms remain covered in velvet wrapping as they are paraded around town. Indeed, the identities of the specific kerisses and lances (e.g., the lance Sir Avoidance) selected for circumambulation remain unknown even to the persons carrying them. The cloaked heirlooms perform as reminders of what is *not* seen, of a power necessarily hidden and sequestered behind palace walls. As noted in previous chapters, the

[31] I return to the mystical exploits of Soedjono Humardhani and his ties with the presidential palace in Chapter 7.

[32] For an account of ritual circumambulation during epidemic illness performed by the Kraton Yogyakarta, see B. ter Haar, "Twee Bezweringsfeesten te Jogjakarta," *Djåwå* 2 (1922): 29–33. The connection between pusaka heirlooms and Suran rests entirely on the widespread Javanese custom of cleaning sacred kerisses and lances during this month. Parading of the albino water buffalo known as Sir Slamet was a familiar weekly custom within the Kraton's immediate neighborhood of Baluwarti.

[33] Singgih Wibisono, *Kirap Pusaka* (Surakarta: Museum Radyapustaka, 1972), p. 17.

Kraton's reflection of an ideal realm hidden from view derived from the process of loss—an absented kingdom—upon which Surakarta was first founded. Recalling a displaced past, the Heirloom Parade circumvents, quite literally, the contradictions of the Kraton's creation and in the process appears to recover the realm of the hidden, a realm most desirable, in turn, to New Order Javanese concerned with origins.

Although the Soehartos and their cohorts, of course, enthusiastically supported the Kraton's 1970s efforts to recover its position as an idealized site of culture, this support entailed a certain envy on the part of the president and First Lady, who responded by extending their personal vision of a dream kingdom they might call their own—precisely the vision that later would guide the construction of Mini's grand Audience Hall. On June 8, 1971, just after plans for Mini had begun, the Soehartos presided at the dedication ceremony of the so-called Mangadeg Foundation, a joint cultural effort on the part of Jakarta Javanese elite (headed by the Soehartos) and the Mangkunagaran Palace. The foundation's name derived from the group's first venture, renovation of the Mangadeg mausoleum complex, the formal gravesite of Mangkunagara I and other palace ancestors.[34] If, for reasons of genealogy, the Kraton Surakarta of Pakubuwana XII was reluctant to acknowledge the president and First Lady as unequaled benefactors of "Javanese" cultural inheritance, and with Mini's materialization still several years off, the Soehartos turned to that *other* Surakarta court, the Mangkunagaran Palace of Mangkunagara VIII, for appropriate recognition. Like their Dutch counterparts of the high colonial past, they would not be disappointed by the cultural receptiveness of this palace, faithfully revealed in the following excerpt from a 1971 Mangkunagaran chronicle recording the Mangadeg dedication. Composed in courtly Javanese verse and reading much like palace accounts of the early twentieth century, this contemporary chronicle is noteworthy for its completely unproblematic application of colonial-era socioliterary conventions to New Order times. The passage begins as the presidential entourage arrives at Mangadeg (located on a western foothill of Central Java's Mt. Lawu) and villagers rush out to glimpse the spectacle at hand.

> The People wished to greet
> President SOEHARTO and

[34] I return to the particular significance attached to renovating gravesites in the New Order and other spiritual ventures of the Soeharto group in Chapter 7.

IBU TIEN [Mrs. Soeharto] with their army escort,
Prince MANGKUNAGARA VIII,
and the Prince's wife.

Moved was the heart of Mrs. SOEHARTO
and so too that of Princess Mangkunagara as they
became acquainted with the People
and bestowed upon them orations
on the spirit of GOLKAR.
Happy were those who pressed in close
to hear this old advice,
in truth that of Parents,
of Servant and Lord together,
of strength in greatness
prepared to carry things through.[35]

Recognized as worthy sources of "old advice," as "Parents" of an extended cultural family, the Soehartos are inscribed in precisely the fashion that a longing for royal origins calls for.

But there is more. Preparing to depart,

MR. GENERAL [President Soeharto] with his army escort
entered their cars and slowly began the journey home.
Coins were tossed out as tinkling token gifts
for those behind seeing off
the departing Guests.
Most happy were the People,
receiving so many coins as alms [*arta udhik-udhik*],
freed from misfortune.[36]

The royal custom of distributing coins as alms (arta udhik-udhik) tossed from His Majesty's automobile's window was one of Pakubuwana X's best known and most popular gestures of kingly beneficence, a gesture that appears not to have been performed by Javanese rulers since 1939, the year of Pakubuwana X's death. The 1971 chronicle is remarkable for

[35] R. Ng. Soenardjo-Rahardjo, *Pengetan Wontenanipun Upatjara Miwiti Panganggenipun Pambangunan/Jajasan ing Laladan Mangadeg* (Surakarta: Mangkunagaran, 1971), p. 19. Capitalization follows that of the original typescript.

[36] Ibid.

its disclosure of just how lofty the Soehartos' aspirations were at this relatively early point in their New Order rule. Indeed, although the president and First Lady's presence at the Mangadeg dedication was meant, among other things, to honor the ancestors of the Mangkunagaran royal house, the Soehartos entertained, it seems, even loftier visions. Next to the Mangadeg mausoleum complex stood Mt. Awakening (Giri Bangun, from *bangun,* a word that immediately calls to mind the New Order's central ideology of *pembangunan,* "development"), the gravesite of Mrs. Soeharto's ancestors with alleged genealogical ties to the Mangkunagaran line, ties most appreciated by the Mangkunagaran Palace. Reconstructed by the Soehartos, the Mt. Awakening site was provided with glistening marble columns, lavishly carved woodwork, gilded pillars, and other signs of respect that substantially outshone the Mangadeg complex. For according to the plans, the tombs of Mt. Awakening would, someday, hold the sanctified remains of President and Mrs. Soeharto, future anterior royal ancestors of New Order "Java."[37]

Despite attention from Jakarta throughout the 1970s, the Kraton Surakarta, however, did not really open up to the cultural visions of the New Order elite. Unlike the Mangkunagaran Palace and the Kraton Yogyakarta, the Kraton Surakarta remained relatively inaccessible and did not transform itself into a refurbished palace, a living museum. Instead, it maintained its legendary position as a fortress of the hidden, a fortress whose physical condition was rapidly deteriorating to the dismay of its would-be patrons in Jakarta. Repeated attempts at renovation were either rejected by palace officials or simply derailed through royal recalcitrance. From 1968 on, New Order officials sought, without success, to convert the Kraton Surakarta into a national monument. (At one point, the Soeharto group apparently offered to buy outright the Langenharja pleasure retreat constructed by Pakubuwana IX.) This peculiar resistance on the part of the Kraton unnerved those Jakartans who would recover the origins of "Java" and, thus, attracted them all the more to Surakarta's decaying fortress and its hidden potential.

Motivated by the very elusiveness of the Kraton's "Java" and the correlative sense that something was missing in "Beautiful Indonesia," that the dream kingdom was still somehow incomplete, the Soehartos' Our Hope Foundation went on to construct what most modern king-

[37] The hill that holds the Giri Bangun site was purchased from local farmers in the early 1970s. Villagers in the area maintain that the land was bought but not actually sold because the owners were forced to sell at prices well below market value. One villager noted, "Why would Harto want to be buried with his wife's family? She's actually in the driver's seat, you see."

doms, at one point or another, produce: a museum. In April 1980, exactly one five-year plan after the formal opening of "Beautiful Indonesia," Mini's "Indonesia Museum" was dedicated. This sizeable addition to the culture park included one large building, the museum proper, surrounded by a moat with bridge, various outer pavilions, ornamental turrets, and formal gardens. According to the architect, the Indonesia Museum's design was "based on traditional Balinese architecture."[38] Perhaps the New Order architect encountered the same problems as the Dutch creator of the Nederlandsche Paviljoen (Netherlands Exhibition Hall) in the 1931 International Colonial Exhibition in Paris, for Mini's museum bears an astonishing resemblance to that late colonial structure. The 1931 Dutch architect, W. J. G. Zweedijk, had hoped to produce "a copy of the Borobudur temple" but abandoned this plan owing to its "impracticality," choosing, instead, "Balinese turrets" and "a temple gate from South Bali" as dominant motifs.[39] Or perhaps, too, in light of Bali's international fame—"Java," after all, is best known as coffee—Our Hope Foundation felt compelled to give Bali more prominence than its Javanese sponsors desired. In either case, half a century after the construction of the Nederlandsche Paviljoen, the same motifs and design would reappear in Mini's newest addition, reflecting a coincidental vision of two cultural-political empires. With the "Javanese" Audience Hall providing a natural center and cynosure, the "Balinese" styled Indonesia Museum represented an auxiliary emblem of cultural inheritance.

The museum's interior program, however, returns one, to "Java." Borrowing its title from the Indonesian national motto "Unity in Diversity," the first floor presents a large painting entitled "The Indonesian Image," which depicts a map dotted with dwarfish couples in customary costumes, standing in front of tiny customary houses set within a tropical richness of flora and fauna.[40] The guidebook explains, "the country in all its natural and cultural wealth."[41] Filled mostly with display cases (housing puppets, masks, "custom" costumed mannequins, and an entire Javanese gamelan orchestra), the dominating central exhibit of the Unity in Diversity display highlights a wedding ceremony, an enormous affair

[38] *Museum Indonesia* (Jakarta: Yayasan Harapan Kita, 1980), pp. 28–29. The architect was Ida Bagus Tugur of Udayana University.

[39] H. H. Zeijlstra, *Nederland te Parijs 1931 Gedenkboek* (N.p.: Oost en West, 1931), p. 33.

[40] Although there is no evidence that Mini's museum actually borrowed ideas from the Nederlandsche Paviljoen, it is worth noting that an almost identical glass painting of the Indies appeared in the 1931 exhibition.

[41] *Museum Indonesia,* p. 47.

with participants and guests, behind glass, the "Diorama of a Traditional Wedding Ceremony for Central Javanese Aristocrats." The placard in front of the case that houses this 360-degree diorama notes that this is, in fact, a scene from a Solonese wedding. The guidebook adds, "To demonstrate the spirit of Unity in Diversity, the wedding ceremony is attended by guests wearing traditional costumes from almost all areas of Indonesia."[42] Represented in this form, the spirit of unity produces novel results. Attending this aristocratic Solonese wedding are, for example, a woman in a grass skirt and several men with aboriginal feather headdresses. It is precisely in light of these unintentionally comic images of diversity, however, that Mrs. Soeharto's idea of cultural unity is constituted. For attired in velvet, jewels, and fine batik, the plushly dressed Central Javanese mannequin bridal couple look relatively grand as they hold ceremonial court, blankly reflecting the First Lady's own ruling "Javanese" vision.

While the first floor trains the visitor's eye to focus on Indonesia's diversity (*keaneka ragaman*), the second floor, Man and Environment, is explicitly educational: a domestic miscellany of household objects, dioramas of everyday customs and rites, a mounted deerhead ("Donated by Mrs. Soeharto"), dozens of miniature models of customary houses, barns, and modes of transportation. The third and crowning floor, Arts and Crafts, houses the museum's requisite treasures: batik, ceramics and carvings, silver ornaments, semiprecious stones and jewelry, Indonesian currency, a twenty-five-foot copper Tree of Life ("full of symbolism," reminds the guidebook), an ornate bowl filled with marble eggs, and a large marble book encrusted with glass flowers, donated, again, by the First Lady.[43] As Sukamdani Gitosardjono (deputy manager of the "Beautiful Indonesia" Project and Mrs. Soeharto's brother-in-law) has pointed out, "throughout the park, the First Lady's hand may be recognized."[44]

Like its European predecessors of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (including Jakarta's own Central Museum established by the Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences), Mini's museum is dedicated to training

[42] Ibid., p. 9.

[43] The "book" reads "With Flowers We Express Love, With Flowers We Develop" (Dengan Bunga Kita Nyatakan Kasih Sayang, Bersama Bunga Kita Membangun), a two-line bit of poetry. The first line is European derived—the gift of love—whereas the second, unrelated line borrows the New Order's development slogan "With 'X' [Birth Control, e.g.] We Develop" and possibly refers to Mrs. Soeharto's thriving orchid industry. An unintended reading of *bunga* (flower) is "financial interest."

[44] "Taman Mini: Reflections of Indonesian Life and Thought," *Garuda* 2 (1982): 14.

the eye (ground floor), educating the mind (second floor), and storing the cultural valuables (top floor). *Unlike* its predecessors, however, this museum holds almost nothing old; there are no antiques here. Indeed, save some outdated Indonesian currency, the deerhead, and a few other items, everything else in this museum is (or was, in 1980) spanking new. When asked whether the Indonesia Museum is really a museum because its collection consists of new objects, Mrs. Soeharto offered this response, "We may call it a museum now because someday everything in it will be antique ["old"; the Javanese is *kuna*]."[45] What the First Lady seems to have had in mind is not a future time when the collection shows age—when, say, mannequins deteriorate and begin to lose fingers or the copper Tree of Life corrodes—but just the opposite, an already arrived future of continued changelessness when the collection can be called antique simply on the assumption that it will exist, like the Grand Place-of-Importance Audience Hall, hundreds of years later. The real appeal of marble eggs and books lies, after all, in their promise of showing no signs of change, cultural treasures forever new *and* antique. Reiterating the future anterior sense of authenticity by which the Audience Hall is secured and the Soeharto royal tombs are luxuriously prepared, "Beautiful Indonesia"'s 1980 addition may be called a "museum"—in light of the novelty of its antiquities—now.[46] Meanwhile, however, the Kraton Surakarta would exhibit signs of deterioration so thoroughly scandalous to New Order concerns with recovering "Javanese" origins that Jakarta's privileged interest in the fortress of the hidden was to be redoubled.

Something Missing 2
An Incident, Its Consequences, and the Wedding

What appeared to Jakarta's Javanese patrons as the first real crack in the Kraton's otherwise highly protective state of cultural affairs emerged

[45] This was reported to me by a senior official at Museum Indonesia. The unfortunate official had worked happily for years at Jakarta's Central Museum but because of his talents as a polyglot "suddenly was transferred to Mini" where he remained on call as a guide for foreign visitors.

[46] This newness is striking if one visits old local museums like the Radyapustaka in Solo, a colonial era hangover that has yet to be integrated successfully into the national museum system. From the Department of Education and Culture's point of view, the Radyapustaka's enormous mechanical antique clocks (*jam antik*), Victorian calliopelike "Gamelan-Machine," or "Gift from Napoleon" vase (with what appear to be the dried remnants of the original flower arrangement) suggest a headache of cultural connections to a colonial past.

with a strange turn of events accompanying the 1982 Heirloom Parade. The Solonese weekly newspaper *Dharma Nyata* reported the following:

> Although this year's First of Sura celebration was no less festive than those of previous years, nevertheless the people felt that something was missing. . . . This year, Sir Slamet was absent and did not lead the Heirloom Parade. According to the official explanation, Sir Slamet made an appearance near the Palace before the procession began, *but for some unknown reason as the moment of the Parade approached and* [Pakubuwana XII] *stood ready to give the command to begin, suddenly Sir Slamet began wandering off somewhere else, who knows where.* . . . Finally, around 1:00 A.M., October 19, the procession was forced to depart without Sir Slamet.[47]

The Central Java daily *Suara Merdeka* expanded on Sir Slamet's unprecedented behavior:

> The absence of the albino water buffalo at the Kraton Surakarta's Heirloom Parade on the first of Sura has become a hot conversation topic for the people of Surakarta. In fact, newspapers in Semarang and Jakarta have also printed articles concerning this albino water buffalo and the various reasons for his absence at the procession.
>
> . . . Ki Lurah Maesoprawiro [Sir Slamet's caretaker] followed [Sir Slamet] to the Solo River. Politely—"Please, Sir, your humble servant will accompany you to the procession"—he invited the water buffalo to join the Parade. *But [the buffalo] shook his head.*[48]

And Yogyakarta's *Kedaulatan Rakyat* added even more:

> The incident last Monday night when Sir Slamet did not lead the Kraton's Heirloom Parade . . . raised many questions for people. This is the first time such an incident has occurred in the history of the Kraton's Heirloom Parade.
>
> . . .
>
> For older folk as well as those who wish to believe, this incident is no accident. Instead it's seen as a certain sign, *a certain omen that something will happen.*
>
> . . .
>
> Hardjonagoro [a senior Kraton official with close ties to Jakarta] explained that since the incident last Monday night his telephone has been ringing constantly. Calls are coming not just from Solo, but from

[47] *Dharma Nyata,* October (week 5), 1982 (emphasis added).
[48] *Suara Merdeka,* November 7, 1982 (emphasis added).

places outside of Solo, including Jakarta. Most callers want to know if it is true that Sir Slamet did not join the Heirloom Parade this time.[49]

The ominous implications of the Sir Slamet incident were augmented by a timely forest fire on Mt. Lawu, the site of an annual mass pilgrimage on the Eve of Sura and a highly significant point of cosmological reference for the Kraton Surakarta.[50] Combined, the buffalo's absence and the Mt. Lawu fire appeared to demand explanation; a rumored answer began to circulate. Certain members of the royal family, the story went, had recently absconded with a dozen or so heirloom daggers, or kerisses, and secretly sold them to wealthy Jakartans who collected such things. Although stories about palace valuables disappeared to Jakarta were neither new nor unfounded, the fact that Sir Slamet seemed to be on ceremonial strike necessarily raised questions concerning the Kraton's future. Rumors concluded that the Kraton would, in the very near future, be turned into a museum.

Such a conclusion ideally suited visions of Jakarta's would-be patrons of the Kraton Surakarta, visions which by 1982 extended well beyond conventional museum boundaries. Just one month after the incident, a Jakarta Javanese professional keenly interested in the Kraton's future summed up the situation as follows:

Not too long ago I was offered a Pakubuwana IX keris, extremely beautiful encrusted with diamonds, for 150 million rupiah. [The man did not say whether he accepted this offer.] Something is wrong here, but national museum laws don't apply to this situation. It's clear that the Kraton needs our help. First, the royal family should be given stipends. I've heard that the Mangkunagara thinks this is an excellent idea. Second, respect for our traditional rulers should be restored, I mean in civic life. We could make the Pakubuwana an honorary mayor or governor perhaps. The Mayor of Solo would bow to him, everyone would as a *symbol* of traditional authority [*simbol kawibawaan tradisional*]. That's what we need. Third, and this is my own idea, there should be "Guided Tourism" [a transposition of Sukarno's "Guided Democracy"]. Visitors to the Kraton would not pay *but* would have to be granted permission to enter. And, everyone will have to take off their shoes before they enter the Kraton courtyard—not like an ordinary museum. Pak Harto's [Soeharto] Our Hope Foundation has lots of resources and really understands the Pakubuwana's position. I'm sure the foundation

[49] *Kedaulatan Rakyat,* October 21, 1982 (emphasis added).

[50] These fires were extensive and for a while left many pilgrims trapped on the mountain's summit. I return to the significance of Mt. Lawu's 1982 Suran misfortune in Chapter 7.

> is willing to help if the Kraton Council can be persuaded. With the recent heirloom scandal, we should have a good case.[51]

The Kraton, however, remained unconvinced by promises from promoters who, more often than not, were just the persons that made heirloom sales lucrative. In response to Sir Slamet's absence, the Mt. Lawu fire, and blackmarketed heirlooms, the palace in fact retreated even more into its own world of "Java," redoubling its interest in matters of authenticity. A Kraton official bothered by the loss of palace valuables yet equally wary of outside intentions, arrived, in characteristically circuitous fashion, at a conclusion quite different from that of the professional cited above:

> What is *kabudayan* [culture], you ask. It is the product of human labor which comes from inside [*batin*] with good intentions. "Bu*daya,*" that comes from *daya* ["force," in this case, a magical or spiritual force]. For example, if a keris-smith meditates properly, his product will be filled with this force. Otherwise the keris is just art [*seni*]. When empowered keris-smiths [*empu*] made kerisses and lances for kings, their creations became heirlooms. Copies of these heirlooms were often made for the king's children. This was called *dipunputrani* [literally, "to be made as an offspring"], you know, a duplikat. So when people say that they have just purchased an heirloom keris, now hold on: is that *really* an heirloom? They don't know if it is a duplikat, or not. They can't be sure that it is *really* authentic [asli].[52]

Indeed, as one young prince often joked informally: "You can take anything, bury it in your backyard for a while, call it an heirloom, and sell it in Jakarta. They'll buy anything, from buttons to spittoons." Yet just this possibility inspired, of course, extensive discursive attention to issues of authenticity and originality (keaslian) both within palace walls and without. At what point, for example, does an object become an heirloom if, as the Kraton official failed to mention, a duplikat *owned* by royal personages may have acquired (through contagion) the requisite daya, or force? Or conversely, when does an heirloom cease being such an object if, as is also customarily noted, a *sold* heirloom may lose (in exchange) its force? The more pronounced Our Hope Foundation's "Javanese" claims to and on authenticity became, the more devoted the Kraton's attempts at

[51] The Jakartan quoted here wished to remain anonymous because of the delicateness of the issues at stake.

[52] R. Ng. Yasadipura, personal communication, 1982.

reclaiming whatever it is that may be called, as it were, "*really* authentic." Given the privileged status of this palace as an ideal site for recovering "Java"'s past, an institution well practiced at discovering its own origins by repeating them, the Soehartos themselves could not possibly avoid, it seems, the attraction of such repetition. In the months that followed the 1982 Heirloom Parade scandal, two events would exhibit this renewed attraction most tellingly, first in Surakarta, then in Mini.

Just two months after the heirloom incident, Jakarta officials appropriated the Kraton's most extensive annual ceremonial event, the Sekatèn festival. As noted in Chapter 2, with this festival Central Javanese rulers ceremoniously observed the Prophet Muhammad's birth as they displayed royal authority. In postindependence times, the week-long carnivalesque Sekatèn celebration survived as a fair held on the Kraton's frontal plain, the northern alun-alun. Vast crowds of Central Javanese are attracted by Sekatèn's hundreds of booths selling everything from suit coats to snake oils and by a continuous program of theatrical performances, musical presentations, trance acts, fortune telling, and similar offerings. Foremost among the festival's attractions are the Kraton's own Sekatèn gamelan (a pair of archaic gamelan ensembles sounded day and night in the central mosque's courtyard just off the alun-alun proper), the procession of the "mountainous" rice offerings of the palace, and the exhibition of palace artifacts in the Kraton's outer audience hall. Although most of these attractions were present at Solo's 1982 Sekatèn, they were largely overshadowed by what the government had prepared, an all-encompassing "Exhibition of Development."

Capitalizing on a calendrical coincidence between the 1982 Sekatèn celebration and National Social Service Day, government officials transformed the Kraton's annual festivities into a national cause. Solo's *Dharma Nyata* announced:

> This year's Sekatèn celebration will be even more festive since it will linked with National Social Service Day, December 20, 1982, whose commemoration will be centered in Solo.
>
> Vice President Adam Malik will officially open the National Social Service Day exhibition on the alun-alun on December 20. The exhibition will run through December 30.[53]

The exhibition featured a pair of main attractions that took up most of the alun-alun's expansive space. One was the Department of Social Services Pavilion, an enormous construction of Javanese aristocratic archi-

[53] *Dharma Nyata,* December (week 3) 1982.

Fig. 11. The Kraton's "mountainous" offerings (*gunungan*), under guard, in procession from Surakarta's central mosque during Sekatèn 1982.

tectural design similar to the palaces permanently installed in "Beautiful Indonesia." Inside, visitors confronted a series of flow charts graphically projecting New Order development. "Research and Development Policy," for example, was crisscrossed with arrows indicating flows, counterflows, circularities, and ideal end points of the New Order bureaucratic process. "The Process for Developing Isolated Peoples"—"like those found in Irian Jaya," explained our guide—depicted an ascent from squatting apelike figures to modern-looking individuals in government dress. Following this, booths promoted development efforts considered "still necessary" (thus implying that most other problems had already been solved): programs for prostitutes, the blind, juvenile delinquents, victims of natural disasters. Near the pavilion's exit door stood a papier-mâché volcano in a state of perpetual eruption and a tiny model community representing what the government would provide should volcanic catastrophe totally obliterate a village. A man in line immediately behind me exclaimed, "What good fortune if there's a disaster!" There was, indeed, little that would benefit most of the forty-five thousand daily visitors whose flow through the pavilion generally followed the course of the flow charts themselves.

The strategically situated exit door of the Social Services Pavilion pointed visitors immediately in the direction of the Exhibition of Development's second main attraction, the Department of Transmigration display, a 2,500-square-meter presentation of a life-size transmigration plot complete with functional house, transplanted vegetable garden, and "all the necessary equipment provided transmigrants"—a generous assortment of shovels. At this display's exit stood a sign-up booth where hundreds of villagers, as newspaper reports put it, "spontaneously [*secara spontanitas*] registered themselves as candidates for transmigration after they had witnessed the exhibition."[54] Development logic thus ran, in short: social services, then transmigration, then "Bon voyage!"[55]

The entire exhibition was surrounded by a 600-meter-long billboard raised above Sekatèn crowds.[56] Painted in New Order social realist style, the billboard displayed the history of Indonesia from early national heroes (beginning with the seventeenth-century Javanese ruler Sultan

[54] See, for example, the report of the newspaper *Kedaulatan Rakyat,* December 30, 1982.

[55] Other development exhibits included "The Army Enters the Village" flanked by "The Department of Religion," and a small city of "Department of Education" booths dedicated to "implanting spirit in the next generation."

[56] Constructed by the Yogyakarta-based Samsoelhadi Group, the billboard purportedly displayed "unity and cooperation, service without personal profit" (*Suara Merdeka,* December 17, 1982).

Fig. 12. President Soeharto looms over the 1982 Sekatèn celebration.

Agung) through scenes of the revolution whose fires then transform into a threatening darkness entangled in barbed tentacles representing the Indonesian Communist Party and, finally, General Soeharto in army uniform leading the New Order's "Generation of '66." At this point—the end of history—the billboard turned a right corner, then continued with repeated scenes of gigantic President and Mrs. Soehartos reaching down to bestow blessings in the form of gift-wrapped boxes upon masses of little people beneath them or pointing their hands straight forward as if to guide these tiny figures pushing enormous steel rollers inscribed with "Wheels of Development." Dead center in the exhibition stood a singularly oversized billboard depicting a regal Soeharto alone, smiling, and clapping in appreciation of all he observed below. The 1982 Sekatèn celebration represented, unmistakably, President Soeharto and not the Kraton Surakarta. The celebration's theme (*tema*) was announced on a central banner: "By the consolidation of the People's social participation in National Development, we will make the 1983 Convention of the People's Consultative Council [the select national council that would soon, with routine solemnity, reconfirm Soeharto as president] a Success."

Conspicuously absent at the 1982 Sekatèn, however, was a customary display. The national daily *Kompas* noted the following:

> The traditional festival of Sekatèn in Solo this year will not present its usual exhibition of Kraton artifacts.
>
> . . .
>
> The absence of the Kraton artifacts this year is due to the fact that celebration of National Social Services Day (NSSD) will be centered in Solo. The NSSD exhibition will utilize the palace hall where the Kraton artifacts are usually displayed.[57]

While official explanations suggested that there was not enough space for the Kraton exhibit, rumors reported that the Surakarta palace itself simply refused to have any part of the 1982 exhibition. Retreating from its own royal plaza, the Kraton recalled, yet again, a "Java" that might be hidden behind palace walls, a realm whose artifacts may *not* be shown.

Half a year later, back in Jakarta, the Soehartos hosted an event designed at the time to represent, in many respects, the culmination of their ruling cultural vision. On May 8, 1983, three-thousand dignitaries and members of Indonesia's elite (including the vice-president, members of the cabinet, top-ranking military officials, and foreign diplomats) assem-

[57] *Kompas*, December 15, 1982.

bled in "Beautiful Indonesia." Inside the Audience Hall, guests sat for almost three hours while they witnessed an intensely self-conscious "Javanese" scene. Four first-row "VIP-VIP" chairs had been provided for the representatives of Central Java's royal lineages: Pakubuwana XII, Mangkunagara VIII, Hamengkubuwana IX, and Paku Alam VIII. What these privileged guests were meant to observe was a "tradisional Javanese wedding ceremony" of unprecedented grandeur: the wedding of President and Mrs. Soehartos' daughter, Siti Hediati, to Major Prabowo Subianto, a professional army man with an unusually fast-rising career.[58] Mini had been conceived by the Soehartos as evidence of an enormous cultural inheritance. Siti's wedding would bring the full import of such an inheritance home.

Closed-circuit TV monitors were positioned at strategic points so that all three-thousand guests might observe the rites close up. Nothing was to be missed; the scene would be complete. News descriptions of the wedding read like a ceremonial Who's Who in Jakarta politics. At 10:00 A.M. the ceremony began with requisite Islamic wedding vows. *Kompas* reports:

> Vice President Umar Wirahadikusumah (attending the wedding with his wife) and Commander of the Armed Forces General M. Jusuf acted as official witnesses for this. Meanwhile, President Soeharto accompanied by Inspector-General of Development Sudjono Humardani and [Inspector-General of Social Affairs] Ibnu Hartomo, were ceremonial representatives. The Islamic official performing the marriage was the head of the regional office of the Department of Religious Affairs, K. H. Moch. Nasir.[59]

The news reports also read like a What's What in "Javanese" ritual. After describing a half-dozen or so rites, each involving various configurations of Jakarta notables performing ceremonial duties, *Kompas* concluded, "Prof. Dr. Soemitro Djojohadikusumo [father of the groom] was attired

[58] The groom was reported by *Tapol* as "the army's fastest rising star" ("Junta . . . and Dynasty?" *Tapol*, no. 59, 1983, p. 9). At the time of the wedding, Prabowo was a deputy commander of the 81st detachment of Kopassandha, the elite paratroop corps and was rumored to have killed Nicolau Lobato, Fretilin's commander. (This rumor turned out to be false.) Son of the prominent Indonesian economist, Dr. Soemitro Djojohadikusumo, Prabowo is said to have been introduced to the Soeharto daughter by Colonel (now General) Wismoyo Arismundar, Commander of Kopassandha and second husband of Mrs. Soeharto's younger sister.

[59] *Kompas*, May 9, 1983.

in a matching 'truntum' batik, traditional black coat, and Solonese headdress."[60]

To assist everyone involved, the First Family issued a fifty-two-page manual, "The Wedding Ritual" (*Upacara Pernikahan*), which later also served as a printed program for the guests and a guide for journalists.[61] Beginning with "D-day minus 60" and counting down through two months of ritual duties leading to the day of the wedding, the manual then specified, in devoted detail, how the wedding ritual itself should be properly executed. Seventeen aerial blueprint sketches (similar to the sort used in sports or military strategy) mapped out various formations (*formasi*) ritual performers would assume. Each sketch was provided with an explanation like this one for the "weighing" rite formation: "The bride's guardian [Soeharto] sits in the bridal couple's place, then the groom sits on the guardian's right knee, the bride on his left. Verbal exchange between the guardian and the mother of the bride [Mrs. Soeharto]. After their dialogue, the bride and groom stand, then take their rightful wedding seats."[62]

Like many New Order "Javanese" weddings, the Soeharto wedding at Mini presented an ideal chain of command at work for the sake of "ritual," a visible structure of authority projected in patently cultural terms. Unlike other "Javanese" weddings, however, the D-day event in Mini's Audience Hall brought two realms of authority—contemporary politics and "traditional" custom—into near perfect congruence. The Soehartos had at their disposal, after all, a privileged arsenal of resources. The nature of authority behind this wedding is disclosed by the form of diachronic time used for organizing ceremonial events, for the wedding was programmed precisely to military time: "The Wedding Ritual," "0730 hours: Those assigned stand ready in their respective positions."[63]

Struck by this precision, *Tempo* magazine remarked that "the event, performed by the bride's family in accordance with Solonese ceremonial etiquette, appeared to be ordered with the exactness and precision of a commander of war."[64] When the magazine's search for the commanding

[60] Ibid.

[61] *Upacara Pernikahan* (Jakarta: Taman Mini Indonesia Indah, 1983). This booklet is essentially a New Order version of colonial-era royal *pranatan*, printed programs of specifications and instructions to palace servants for royal state ceremonies.

[62] Ibid., pp. 26–27.

[63] Ibid., p. 15.

[64] *Tempo*, May 14, 1983, p. 69. *Tempo*'s report—"Newlyweds without a Honeymoon"—was the only major coverage of the wedding that focused on its military connections.

authority behind the scenes questioned Mrs. Soeharto, the First Lady answered, "Father Harto [Bapak Soeharto] is always the one who organizes events."[65] Whether or not this was true for the Mini wedding—press photos tended to focus on Mrs. Soeharto's role—the ritual's military precision underscored the special status of this marriage. "Father's an army man, right? But none of his sons are in the army, so his son-in-law is. Yeah, he's quite pleased," quipped the new bride.[66] "Beautiful Indonesia"'s wedding was as concerned with the construction of an enduring dynasty as it was with the projection of "Javanese" visions. By conjoining dynasty and "tradition" in the form of a wedding—and given the legacy of such an event, no other form could have been more attractive—the Soehartos would demonstrate that in the realm of "Java," all was in good order once more.

The ritual congruence of politics and culture in the Audience Hall thus appealed to a fairy tale past ruled by legendary "Javanese" kings borne by royal marriage alliances. And it was no coincidence that *Tempo* introduced its account of the Soeharto wedding as follows: "Rose and jasmine blossoms lay strewn on the vast floor of that lavishly carved chamber. This was no fairy tale, naturally. This was a feature event in the Grand 'Place of Importance' Audience Hall and Cultural Entertainment Pavilion at BIMP ['Beautiful Indonesia'-in-Miniature Park], where three thousand guests were assembled."[67] Amid the rose and jasmine blossoms, for a fairy tale ceremonial moment it was *as if* the difference between Soeharto as president-general and Soeharto as "traditional" father were erased, recalling the blurring of the political and cultural powers of past kings who also reigned ritually in their ornate chambers. But *Tempo*'s slightly veiled sarcasm—"This was no fairy tale, *naturally*" (*tentu,* read "natch")—works to expose the continuous ahistoricism assumed by "Beautiful Indonesia." It is as if the First Lady were saying, much in the spirit of Mini's Indonesia Museum, the royal tombs of Mt. Awakening, and the Audience Hall itself: "We can act like legendary kings and queens now, because *someday* we, too, will be legendary."

In light of the Soehartos' royal attempt at authenticity, there was, perhaps necessarily, something missing, some critical incompleteness in their "Javanese" wedding scene. One of the four, first-row "VIP-VIP" chairs remained conspicuously *unfilled:* that prepared for the enigmatic

[65] Ibid.

[66] Ibid., p. 70.

[67] "Bunga mawar dan melati ditaburkan di lantai luas di ruang penuh ukiran itu. Ini bukan dongeng, tentu. Ini acara istimewa di Pendopo Agung Sasono Utomo dan Sasono Langen Budoyo, TMII, yang disimak tiga ribu tamu." *Tempo,* May 14, 1983, p. 69.

chief remainder of Central Java's long genealogy of kings. Repeating Sir Slamet's celebrated nonattendance at the 1982 Heirloom Parade, Pakubuwana XII was ceremonially absent. The Kraton Surakarta ruler apparently was unwilling to acknowledge a transfer of cultural power to the authority behind "Beautiful Indonesia." This absence refocused attention on the realm of the hidden yet again, a realm whose deteriorating physical condition appeared to New Order patrons as a visible threat to the continuousness of "tradition" and, therefore, the one site most desirable for reenvisioning such continuity, a remnant reminder of what may be called authentic, and what may not. One and one-half years after the "Beautiful Indonesia" wedding, this threat would reassert itself as it never had before.

Prophetic Effects

On the night of January 31, 1985, the core buildings of the Kraton Surakarta—including its eighteenth-century central pavilion, cavernous inner chambers, and formal reception hall—burned to the ground. Engulfing more than six thousand square meters of palace buildings, the night-long blaze was combated by thirteen fire units aided by five hundred army and police troops, palace servants, and members of the royal family. The fire was reportedly the result of an electrical short circuit; into decrepit, colonial-era 110-volt wiring had surged 220 modern volts.

Unsatisfied by this explanation, newspapers dug deeper into the debris left by the Kraton disaster: "The Kraton Surakarta has been destroyed by fire. Heaven forbid! *What sort of sign is this?* A fire, said to have been caused by an electrical short circuit, devoured the structure on Thursday night from around 10 P.M. until dawn. *Before* this, on Tuesday evening, storm winds and rains in Solo brought down fifty meters of Kraton walls."[68]

A Kraton-affiliated mystic began to provide the press with answers.

> "This incident surely followed God's outline. *It was already predetermined,*" instructed the Kraton Spiritual Sector Head, K. P. H. Mloyomiluhur, to *Kedaulatan Rakyat.*
>
> . . .
>
> "According to the calendrical reckoning of Javanese and mystics, this year would bring great incidents [of misfortune] that disrupt society.

[68] *Minggu Pagi,* February 3, 1985 (emphasis added).

These incidents have been ransomed [*ditebus*] by the fire so that they will not come about."

. . .

"Technologically and rationally, an electrical short circuit appears to have been the cause of the fire. The Kraton's wiring is, in fact, extremely old and dangerous. But I, as a mystically inclined man, along with [Pakubuwana XII] himself, believe that the fire was already predetermined by God, just as a person dies."[69]

That the Kraton fire was an inescapable act of providence was indeed an interpretation promoted by Pakubuwana XII. The king recalled a nineteenth-century prophecy of Surakarta's most famous court author, R. Ng. Ronggawarsita, a prophecy the king had in fact frequently cited, within palace walls, well *before* the fire: the Kraton Surakarta would not survive two hundred fifty years.[70] The year 1985 marked two hundred forty Western years or two hundred forty-seven Javanese years, depending upon one's calendrical preference. "You can believe in this or not, but *these* are the realities," noted the king himself observing the charred ruins of his palace.[71] Even the Kraton's fire-repelling Sir Avoidance (Kyai Singkir), an heirloom lance that allegedly extinguished a blaze threatening the 1922 Sekatèn celebration, did not avert the 1985 flames. This failure underscored the prophecy's powerful sense of inescapability. Moreover, palace servants reported ominous sightings of the ghost of Pakubuwana X and the spirit Queen of the South just before the fire.

Personally supervising the army units sent into the Kraton to clean up the debris and search through the wreckage for objects of value was General Benny Murdani, kingpin of the New Order regime's intelligence apparatus. The general immediately moved to put an end to all prophetic theorizing:

"Reporters will *not* reach their own conclusions. The cause of the fire was an electrical short circuit. This is the finding of the official investigation," instructed Chief of the Indonesian Armed Forces, General L. B. Murdani to the press after visiting the Kraton.

. . .

"According to plans, tomorrow morning [Pakubuwana XII] will go to Jakarta and report to the President," said General L. B. Murdani.[72]

[69] *Kedaulatan Rakyat,* February 4, 1985 (emphasis added).
[70] Nancy Florida, personal communication.
[71] *Suara Merdeka,* February 4, 1985.
[72] *Kedaulatan Rakyat,* February 4, 1985.

Fig. 13. New Order army troops stand guard at the remains of the Kraton Surakarta, following the fire of January 31, 1985. Photograph by Nancy K. Florida.

Murdani then fortified army security at the Kraton; troops had just uncovered cultural inheritance in the form of forty kilograms of gold buried beneath the Kraton's main pillars. The search for cultural valuables—diamond-studded kerisses, bronze statues, gold buttons, and so on—soon became as preoccupying as the search for the fire's cause, and each day the press recorded percentages of objects found and missing. There seemed to be no end to what the Kraton was capable of hiding.

On February 5, just one day after the Pakubuwana reported to Soeharto, the president introduced a glorious plan: the Kraton Surakarta would be rebuilt, its authenticity reclaimed by the newly formed "Committee for the Reconstruction of the Kraton Surakarta." As executive head of this committee, Soeharto was particularly careful to disclaim, in advance, what might otherwise appear as a profoundly un-"democratic" (*demokratis*) development project. For Jakarta's reclamation of Surakarta's legendary palace suggested an unprecedented congruence of New Order and "traditional" political dispensations, a congruence that the Soeharto

regime as an explicitly "democratic" enterprise was not in the position to acknowledge fully and enjoy. According to the daily *Suara Merdeka,* "President Soeharto explained that reconstructing the Kraton Surakarta which burned to the ground recently was not intended as a return to feudalism [*feodalisme*] or to a feudal government in Indonesia, but rather to preserve the center for developing national culture, *particularly Javanese culture.*"[73]

Yet the entourage royally summoned by Soeharto to reclaim the palace was constituted by official members of a New Order hierarchy already in place, loyal "Javanese" citizens already thoroughly prepared for such a task as *Suara Merdeka* dutifully disclosed:

> Coordinating Minister of Politics and Security Surono, accompanied by Minister of Information H. Harmoko, clarified for the press that in connection with the disaster of the Kraton Surakarta's burning, President Soeharto had already summoned persons who feel a love for Indonesian culture, particularly Javanese.
>
> The persons summoned were Surono (Coordinating Minister of Politics and Security), Harmoko (Minister of Information), Ir. Hartarto (Minister of Industry), Soedjarwo (Minister of Forestry), Ir. Suyono Sastrodarsono (Minister of Public Works), L. B. Murdani (Chief of the Armed Forces), Subroto (Minister of Mining and Energy), Ir. Poernomosidi (former Minister of Public Works), Sudwikatmono (of Indocement), Ir. Ariwibowo (of Krakatau Steel), Dr. Mardjono (Inspector-General of the Department of Health), Sudjono Humardhani (Inspector-General of Development), and Dr. Ario Darmoko (Chief of the Bureau of Statistics and Presidential Reports).
>
> These individuals were summoned by Soeharto not as government officials but as private citizens who could be counted on for their love of national culture, particularly Javanese.
>
> . . .
>
> Without stating the total amount of contributions necessary for reconstructing the Kraton Surakarta, Surono explained that the *first thing to be reconstructed would be the Central Pavilion, the place usually used for grand rituals in the Kraton.*
>
> . . . [Mr. Soeharto] has already made a financial contribution of ten million rupiah, fifty percent of his salary for five months.[74]

A follow-up news report noted that in his conversation with the Pakubuwana, the president reiterated his concern that Kraton ceremonial

[73] *Suara Merdeka,* February 6, 1985 (emphasis added).
[74] Ibid. (emphasis added).

life be continued, without interruption, during the reconstruction process: "All traditional rituals [upacara tradisional] in the Kraton will continue to be carried out as previously. 'Although they may be minimal in scale, *traditional rituals must be continued.' This was the President's instruction.*"[75]

With the Committee for the Reconstruction of the Kraton Surakarta established, contributions began pouring in, many from anonymous donors. On February 8, one hundred tons of cement were donated by "a businessman who wished to remain unidentified."[76] The same day, the committee announced that reconstruction would take two years. Of crucial note was the fact that special efforts would be made to ensure that the reconstructed Kraton would appear, upon completion, authentic, that is, asli.

> The forms of the buildings will not be changed, but made just like the previous ones. Only the internal construction will be changed, exchanged with steel and concrete. The old main pillars of teak wood will be exchanged with concrete ones whose exterior will be panelled with wood. "All of the workers, including the wood carvers, will be our own people," stated Ir. Suyono.
>
> According to the Minister of Public Works, concrete and steel constructions are stronger than those of wood, and what is important is that they are able to resist raging fires. . . . "*Basically, we will make every possible effort to restore the asli form with modern technology,*" he noted.[77]

On December 17, 1987, completed uncharacteristically within New Order development deadlines, a newly asli Kraton Surakarta hosted dedication ceremonies. Led by the Soehartos, the Reconstruction Committee attended as did various other government and military officials, along, of course, with members of the Surakarta royal family. The effect of the palace's representation that awaited their arrival was, according to the press, most remarkable: "In the Kraton Surakarta which burned to the ground in January 1985, three of the four main buildings have now been completely reconstructed *in even greater elegance and greater authority.*"[78]

The effect of "even greater authority," of a redoubled sense of authen-

[75] *Kedaulatan Rakyat,* February 7, 1985 (emphasis added).
[76] *Suara Merdeka,* February 9, 1985.
[77] *Kedaulatan Rakyat,* February 9, 1985 (emphasis added).
[78] *Suara Merdeka,* December 10, 1987 (emphasis added).

ticity built into the successfully recovered asli Kraton, reaffirmed the Reconstruction Committee's pride and esteem as exemplary representatives of "Javanese" authority. The palace could now be enjoyed and ceremoniously employed in all its virtual "Kraton"-ness, a reestablished site for recalling "Java." While members of the court family and staff shared in this pleasure, they were, of course, aware of certain changes. At the dedication, one princess nonchalantly noted that the centerpiece chandelier in the palace's Central Pavilion was no longer asli, adding: "The original Sir Obscure [Kyai Remeng, as this palace heirloom had been dubbed] was destroyed in the Kraton fire. The present one is just a duplikat."[79] Behind this peculiarly self-evident statement—"Of course that chandelier was destroyed," one might think—lay, however, other possibilities, notably prophetic implications of just the sort that General Murdani had sought to dispel when amid the ruins of the Kraton he warned observers *not* to reach their own conclusions. The customary comment from long-term court servants faced with their reconstructed Kraton "of even greater elegance" was understandably more muted than that of the princess, although, in understatement, even more unsettling: "Quite handsome, but . . ."[80]

Within the space of this ellipsis remained a difference that reiterated, through absence, the difference across which the authenticity of "Java" is instituted. For just as 1939 marked the prophetic passing of Pakubuwana X and thereby affirmed the sense that at one time a true Axis of the Cosmos had existed (while a bicentennial extended the realm of "Java" beyond palace walls through its celebration of origins), the 1985 passing of the palace into ominous flames reaffirmed the sense that a true Kraton had indeed existed, an authentic space now placed in the *past.* That prophecies had once more reclaimed the realm of the hidden—and done so in the disappearing form of total conflagration—was a point brought home, most appropriately, by a Pakubuwana who, according to the "last Axis of the Cosmos" prophecy, was not meant to rule: "You can believe in this or not, but these are the realities." The contradiction of the Kraton's creation had yet again retraced its origins back to a prophetic conclusion. Only this time *nothing* would remain, save, perhaps, memories of what should have now disappeared.

It was precisely this conclusion that would be avoided with the returning of the Kraton to its asli authentic form if "tradition" were to reassert itself. The ellipsis disclosing difference would itself be erased. By

[79] *Editor,* December 19, 1987, p. 8.
[80] Nancy Florida, personal communication.

this I do not mean to say that a prior realm of pure difference somehow had existed in which authenticity was then, or even now in retrospect, immediately self-evident. The longed-for chandelier Sir Obscure was, for example, an exquisitely European piece of crystal craftwork drawn into a world within which it could eventually be viewed as "authentically Javanese." "Obscure," the very name obscured the potential foreignness of the light's source. Indeed, the ideal figure of "Java" emerged and had flourished under conditions, primarily colonial, that appeared to demand the displacement of difference: from the displaced kingdom of 1745 ritually circumvented (with the help of the Dutch East Indies Company) in the form of a royal progress, retraced back to the 1939 bicentennial displacement of the vacated throne, and back even further, perhaps, to the 1980s displacement of the palace itself.

Yet the New Order's 1987 recovery of the palace from ashes—thereby circumventing the difference between what is "authentic" and what is not; between the old palace and the new—constituted a somewhat different, although undoubtedly related, means of cultural retrieval. While the palace retraced its origins back to their prophetic conclusion in the all-consuming light of the fire, the Reconstruction Committee, led by President Soeharto, arrived at its own conclusion. "Traditional rituals must be continued. This was the President's instruction." That is, while Kraton prophecy announced, in effect, "This will all end!" New Order "tradition" insisted on just the opposite: "This can't end; it must go on!" The 3.73 billion rupiah restored Kraton was designed to exhibit a wholly continuous authenticity that would survive, like Mini's Audience Hall itself, endlessly. The destroyed palace would be reconstructed through modern technology (as the minister of Public Works put it) in a form so advanced that it could already be called asli. Thus, for all the similarities between the displacement of difference upon which the Kraton was founded and the effacement of historical difference built into "Beautiful Indonesia"'s future anterior mode of cultural reproduction, this dissimilarity might remain: Kraton prophecy is perfectly capable of recognizing that one's days may be numbered, of foreseeing an end; New Order "tradition," by definition, is not.

Now this apparent difference between prophetic foresight and, as it were, future anterior foresight, of course, calls to mind the possibility of a shift to what Jean-François Lyotard, Fredric Jameson, and others have recognized as a postmodern condition, which (through sustained depthlessness, unparodic pastiche, deferred signification, etc.) effects an effacement of history, a time always already present. Many of "Beautiful Indonesia"'s attractions—a museum housing new antiquities, the "Java-

nese" wedding attended by aboriginal guests, "Borobudur"-ness suspended in virtual reality—suggest just such a shift. Indeed, the site of Mrs. Soeharto's original inspiration leading to the founding of Mini, Disneyland, "I was inspired to build a project of that sort in Indonesia, only more complete and more perfect," stands, in many respects, as an unintended hallmark of the postmodern condition. But "Beautiful Indonesia," despite its requisite quotation marks, is not simply a Southeast Asian citation of, say, Tokyo Disneyland. For what the Soehartos hope to recover is a space of cultural reproduction, "particularly Javanese," *already* well practiced in reproducing itself in the idealized form of "Java." That is, the longing for the "more complete" itself recalls a specific logic of reproduction—the recalling of origins through the Javanese authentic, the asli—inherently foreign to other, possibly postmodern, theme parks: the reproduction of "Java" under colonial conditions. If contemporary international travelers visiting Mini discern certain postmodern effects in its Disneylike attractions, they may do so because the object of their gaze has already been prefigured, in part, from within the postcolonial space of cultural reproduction that "Java" would foreshadow and not wholly transposed from without. Not unlike Dutch Orientalists of the late colonial era who recognized in Surakarta's "Java" a subject already fit for ideal Javanological attention, these contemporary travelers would be thoroughly unsurprised that an object entirely appropriate to their postmodern gaze should, in fact, exist. In short, although the conditions of advanced capitalism that facilitate the dissemination of Disney inspirations like those realized in Mini no doubt accelerate postmodern effects, these effects, in places like New Order Indonesia, necessarily lean upon a trace of the modern colonial past. It is precisely the history of that past—the very coloniality of "Java"—that Mini would circumvent through its obsessive recovery of "tradition."

With this I return to the critical difference between a prophetic foresight that would have already consigned the future to the past and a future anterior foresight that, in its always-already mode of production, would extend the present into the future by recalling the past "tradition." What is noteworthy about the prophecies anticipating the passing of Pakubuwana X is not simply their uncommon prescience; that, after all, is prophecy's forte. What they unnervingly foreshadow is the passing of a world increasingly encroached upon by modern figures of "tradition" of the sort inscribed, for example, in the "Javanese person" of Padmasusastra's *Tatacara.* That is, at the very moment when the shadow of "tradition" begins to appear as a representation of the past—first as tatacara, then as *traditie* in formal Javanological discourse—the past

knows, as it were, that its days are numbered. Foreseeing its own end, prophetic knowledge thus almost voluntarily gives way to the institution of "tradition" (with prophecy itself soon becoming a subsidiary subject of institutional analysis) yet remains, *for a moment at least,* as a contrary sign of all that "tradition" might not represent. Repeating itself in the extraordinary Kraton fire of 1985, the momentary contrariness of prophecy threatened yet again the stucture of "tradition" by recalling the contradiction of the Kraton's creation to the New Order present. But that retraced warning to future anterior conditions would give way to a "traditional" structure of "even *greater* authority." This leads one to rethink how it is that in the wake of catastrophic misfortune or prophetic apocalypse (depending on one's perspective), "tradition" becomes so dramatically secured. And here, one may recall President Soeharto's instruction to Pakubuwana XII during that most disturbing extended moment lying *between* the Kraton's destruction and reconstruction: "Traditional rituals must be continued!"

Under the Rubric of "Ritual"

Key to the process of eliding the difference between past and future—between what may have been asli and what henceforth may not—implied by a reconstructed Kraton was a rhetorical construct so familiar, in contemporary Indonesia as elsewhere, that it would appear to escape critical attention: ritual. Faced with the threat of the Kraton Surakarta's permanent displacement, President Soeharto moved to secure "tradition" by insisting that its rituals, at all costs, be continued. This move repeated, in effect, that made by Pakubuwana II himself when the threatened king recovered his palace in 1745 by moving in ritual procession as if performing a royal progress; at a moment when conditions called for permanent exile, ritual process appeared to transform a ravaged kingdom into the Kraton Surakarta, Finest in the World. Herein might lie, it would seem, ritual's appeal: the transformative capacity to circumvent the implications of difference, to represent what otherwise might not be.

Yet, as suggested in Chapter 1, what the procession of 1745 appealed to in an unprecedented fashion (and thereby quoted out of context) was the royal progress (tedhak) and not the relatively abstract idiom of ritual. At that time, such an idiom did not exist in Javanese. In fact, it was not until the early twentieth century that the Javanese language would claim a term whose resemblance was close enough to (what one might naturally translate as) *ritual,* that the 1939 bicentennial could recall the prog-

ress of 1745 as an explicitly "ritual procession," reestablishing, in new terms, the contradiction of the Kraton's creation. Thus, when I noted in my analysis of the mideighteenth-century manuscript inscribing the 1745 move that ritual emerged as a new form of power, I was already anticipating a modern form of power—*called* "ritual"—which, through the presumed innocence of retrospection, would have a profound effect in the times to come. Tracing the significance of ritual back to its origins in the early twentieth century, and then again to the New Order present, I might rediscover the particular appeal of the 1745 progress. If this appears a suspiciously circuitous historical approach, I would simply note that my interest lay not only in the apparent power of ritual to circumvent the implications of difference contained in a discourse on origins but in the very *originality* of the 1745 event, a circumvented retreat performed and inscribed, at the time, as a "royal progress." Indeed, it was precisely in light of this originality that the 1745 procession would later be recalled and celebrated as a quintessentially "ritual" move.

By the time of the Kraton's New Order reconstruction, the expression *upacara tradisional* (traditional rituals) held such discursive sway in Indonesia that one would have been surprised had the president *not* given the instructions he did. At some point during my research in Java in the 1980s, I was struck by how easily the ubiquitous Indonesian term *upacara* translates as *ritual* and vice versa and wondered under what conditions such a construct might arise. For *upacara* covers rites, rituals, ceremonies, ceremonials, and the like with the same general sweep as does *ritual* in English. Emerging in the early twentieth century with a recognizably ritual import, *upacara* extended the lexical significance of the Javanese *upåcårå,*[81] a term that previously referred neither to ritual in its most general sense of symbolic behavior nor even to a specific ritual event. As indicated by the court manuscripts quoted in earlier chapters, *upåcårå* did not refer to an event at all but instead to the half-dozen or so empowered objects reflecting Javanese kingship: the golden regalia of state (a crowned naga, a jeweled cock, and so on, or *rijkssieraden* as they were called by Dutch colonial officials) that accompanied a Javanese king in procession. Similar, more restricted sets of upåcårå accompanied rank-

[81] I have added diacritical marks to *upåcårå* here to distinguish it from its Indonesian counterpart *upacara.* A similar history to the one introduced in this section in the Javanese/Indonesian context can be traced for *upacara* alone in the Malay context. Although these two histories are, of course, interrelated, I should point out that in Java, the shift in the Malay/Indonesian term's significance appears to have leaned on the shift in Javanese, rather than the reverse. This is not surprising in light of the courtly specifics of the Javanese case.

ing courtiers and regional officials. Thus, when a Javanese regent paraded *sa'upacarané,* that is, "with his upåcårå," the sense would be rather like the English "he moved with ceremony," if *ceremony* were defined in extraordinarily concrete terms.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, under the newly conceived Ethical policy, Dutch colonial administrators severely limited the use of Javanese regalia because of the allegedly feudal implications of the emblems. The administrators were, of course, well aware of the power wielded by regional, semiaristocratic bearers of such emblems and wished to limit their local appeal. Following the years of nationalist political activism, union strikes, and rural protest of the 1920s, however, colonial administrators decided that these *traditioneel* (that is, not feudal, not quite) emblems of power were, perhaps, not so bad after all and instructed Javanese officials to bring out their old upåcårå to restore an atmosphere of cultural-political order. But times had changed. In December 1929 at a meeting that included representatives from most of the existing nationalist organizations, the older generation's nationalist leader Dr. Soetomo was challenged by less-patient, youthful nationalists demanding to know what, exactly, the old leader's efforts had achieved.

> Against the argument . . . "that nothing had changed," the speaker [Dr. Soetomo] gave a number of examples to illustrate how much things in fact had changed. He said that a number of regents often came to visit him not on official business but just to drink a cup of coffee. After the government had instructed the regents to wear the old feudal robes of state and carry the old feudal symbols of power, one regent had told him: "I went out with my yellow *songsong* [ceremonial parasol] in front of me, dressed in my robes of state. The people gathered around shouting, 'Look, the regent is getting married!' I put my *songsong* away, covered the car with cloths, and drove home rather embarrassed." Another regent told the speaker: "I was really thrilled to be able to get my *koeloek* [a conical Javanese head-dress worn by ranking courtiers] out of mothballs! But now my young son runs around the *kaboepaten* [dwelling of the regent] with it saying 'I am Dipanegara'." (Laughter.) According to the speaker it is not true that nothing has changed. On the contrary, *things are moving so fast that the problem is no longer: how do we awaken the people but rather are we strong enough to tone down the powerful spirit of the people?*[82]

[82] From "Report of the 2d *P.P.P.K.I.* Congress held at Solo on 25 December 1929," in *Indonesia: Selected Documents on Colonialism and Nationalism, 1830–1942,* ed. Chr. L. M. Penders (St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland, 1977), pp. 314–15. Emphasis in the original; I have retranslated the bracketed descriptions. Dipanegara was a famed Yogyakarta prince who opposed the Dutch in the 1820s Java War.

At the time of this account, there was no Javanese term with the lexical stretch or the categorical reach of the contemporary *upacara*. What anthropologists and others might now readily recognize as ritual events—spirit-medium séances, dedication ceremonies, New Year's Eve celebrations, harvest food-exchanges, and so on—belonged to separate conceptual realms of expression, realms termed and identified individually. Some events—particularly kingly colonial events such as installations, promotions, and commemorations—were, however, bound together by the Dutch word *ceremonie*. This term was closely associated with one of the stateliest acts performed by Javanese kings from the early nineteenth century on: the Javanese monarch's periodic ceremonious handshake with the embodiment of Dutch colonial authority, Mister Resident or the governor-general himself. When a Javanese king and Dutch governor-general approached one another—each accompanied by his respective ceremonial parasol—for this much celebrated handshake, the two authorities did so in ceremonie.

Owing to the Javanese elite's nostalgia for its retreating, now "traditional," world and to the colonial government's desire to recover such a world as "Java" after the disturbing events in the Indies of the 1920s, by the 1930s the term *ceremonie* gave way to the indigenous Javanese *upåcårå* and its Malay equivalent, *upacara*. These indigenous terms shifted to take over the role of *ceremonie* and, thus, acquired a second, more active meaning over and above regalia; *upacara* could now mean official ceremonial events. Although usage of *upacara* seems to have been limited primarily to palace and official government events (again, occasions such as installations, promotions, and commemorations), during the 1930s the term was employed by literati and journalists to designate other sorts of festivities.[83]

During the Japanese occupation, *upacara* gained public attention through scores of state "rituals" staged by the occupation government. The term then stretched to include village harvest events and other local practices imagined to represent a spirit of reciprocity within Japanese Co-prosperity Sphere times. On August 17, 1945, *upacara* became caught up with Indonesian independence when the historic August-the-Seventeenth "flag ritual," the *upacara bendera*, was performed with un-

[83] W. S. J. Poerwadarminta's 1939 Javanese-Javanese dictionary makes the following entry for *upåcårå:* "1. objects carried in royal procession (e.g., betel containers, banyak dhalang, sawung-galing, etc.); 2. official gatherings [*pasamuwan dhines*] at times announcing the installation of a bupati, etc." (*Baoesastra Djawa* [Batavia: J. B. Wolters, 1939], p. 444). T. Pigeaud, *Javaans-Nederlands Handwoordenboek* (Batavia: J. B. Wolters, 1938), p. 424, offers essentially the same pair of meanings but reverses the order.

precedented celebration. Forgetting the impact of the Japanese occupation (including similar flag rituals that anticipated the 1945 moment), older Javanese now recall this as the time when *upacara* became a really familiar word, a term referring to a special event.

What followed in the 1950s and early 1960s was the further expansion of *upacara* to define and encompass a world of ritual activity as postindependence folklorists cataloged domestic and village practices within the increasingly self-evident framework of upacara tradisional. In New Order times, however, the modern power of *upacara* would be brought home and registered in everyday life. For the term now frames and controls, in a single expression, what were once extraordinarily different realms of practice, realms *so* diverse that if recalled they might now appear to exceed the New Order rhetoric of diversity that would contain them. Weddings, graveyard blessings, public dedication speeches, black magic practices, national elections, village exorcisms, flag ceremonies, prayers, and birth techniques, for example, would all be viewed together in modern Indonesia—like stories on a newspaper's front page—as so many instances of ritual.

The emergence of *upacara* thus signaled a certain shift in knowledge/power formations, a shift from local sites and practices disclosing empowered specifics to the authority of a singular logic that claims diversity while arranging its subjects as variously constituted instances of uniform types. On the eve of the Indonesian national revolution, *upacara* nevertheless occupied, for a brief moment, a threshold position lying almost across this shift. The 1945 Independence-Day flag raising momentarily presented *upacara* as both regalialike object (the Indonesian flag) *and* ceremonial event (the hoisting of independence). Since then, however, that moment has been viewed annually as yet another reiterative example of ritual, an upacara nasional.

The particular history of the modern *upacara* is implied by the redundancy embedded within the phrase "upacara tradisional" itself, where *upacara* (like *ritual*) really already assumes tradition. The term performs as if it arose naturally as an indigenous generalized category for, say, rituals such as weddings and funerals and communal feasts. That is, just as cara Jawi would eventually assume a logical priority, a certain naturalness, over the construct that it arose in contradistinction to (cara Walandi), the term *upacara* would soon circumvent its own origins: a trace of the Javanese-Dutch royal bureaucracy, an appropriate translation of *ceremonie*. Indeed, parading as upacara tradisional, some contemporary customs, including, occasionally, the reappearance of ceremonial parasols accompanying government administrators, would look far *less* ridic-

ulous to many New Order Javanese, than they did to Dr. Soetomo's generation more than half a century ago.

Positioned at an interface between colonial, postcolonial, and anthropological subjects, *upacara* suggests that sometimes indigenous constructs are close enough to anthropology's disciplinary terms to involve those terms in the particular history of a colonial past and in the politics of a postcolonial "traditional" present that would efface such a history. In its own idiosyncratic fashion, the history of *upacara* contains the possibility of *ritual*'s undoing. What anthropological inquiry into ritual tends to overlook are the historical conditions under which the concept ritual may surface. One exemplary exception is Talal Asad's "Towards a Genealogy of the Concept of Ritual," which briefly traces English usage of *ritual* from its 1771 *Encylopaedia Britannica* entry definition ("a *book* directing the order and manner to be observed in celebrating religious ceremonies, and performing divine service in a particular church, diocese, order, or the like")[84] to its wholly new and lengthy 1910 entry where, as Asad puts it: "'Ritual', we learn, is found not only in Christianity or in the religions which Christianity superseded. A crucial part of every religion, 'ritual' is now regarded as a type of routine behaviour which symbolizes or expresses something and, as such, relates differentially to individual consciousness and social organization."[85]

Aside from the uncannily similar trajectories of the terms *upacara* and *ritual* from designating an object to a type of behavior—yet given the abstracted logic of representation that both terms in their modern form employ, this is not totally surprising—what is significant is an implicit shift, as Asad notes, in "institutional structures and organizations of the self to make possible the concept of ritual as a special catagory of behaviour."[86] Such a shift in the organization of the self is just the sort examined here previously for the "Javanese" subject under the heading "Figures for Replication: Character, Costume, Custom." It is, of course, no coincidence that, with modernity's novel demands for identity (and through colonial encounters), a turn-of-the-century Javanese author would produce a work paralleling that of van Gennep and other European scholars of ritual: *Tatacara: The Customary Practices and Behavior of Javanese People Who Still Adhere to Superstitions.* Within decades, the customary practices through which Padmasusastra inscribed a "Javanese" life (thereby assuring that life an identity of its own) would be

[84] Asad, "Towards a Genealogy," p. 74.
[85] Ibid., pp. 74–75.
[86] Ibid., p. 74.

readily recognizable as upacara. As a model of, and means to, identity, "Javanese" ritual would produce a subject ideally fit both for modern colonial classification and for anthropological analysis.

And this leads to another of Asad's insights concerning the restructured concept of ritual as a species of representational behavior, of *symbolic* behavior: "By this idea anthropologists have incorporated a theological preoccupation into an avowedly secular intellectual task—that is, the preoccupation of establishing authoritatively the meanings of *representations* where the explanations offered by indigenous discourses are considered ethnographically inadequate or incomplete."[87] Although much ethnographic work in colonial and postcolonial Java no doubt is motivated by this preoccupation—my own work included, though I avoid outright appeals to the symbolic per se by preoccupying myself instead with (alternative) interpretation, (suppressed) significance, (the possibilities of) translation, and so on—the legacy of "Java," especially in New Order times, makes assumptions of inadequateness particularly problematic. Indeed, in contemporary Java one is confronted not simply by an "indigenous discourse" but a discourse whose own history in many respects parallels that of modern anthropology, that is, a discourse itself thoroughly preoccupied, as we have seen, with transcending the incomplete. If anything, New Order cultural discourse exhibits not so much an inadequateness but a significant surplus of explanation in its continuous effort to make up for what may have been left out. From the most obvious of expressions—for example, the Soehartos' interpretation of offerings prepared for the Mini wedding as a symbolic sign (*tanda simbolik*) of prosperity[88]—to the depths of asli's reflections on what is authentic and what is not, this is a discourse that would rival even anthropology in the department of interpretive authority.

In the chapters that follow, I explore some of the contours of the singular authority that such a discourse sustains in contemporary Java by attending to practices treated quite explicitly, through *upacara,* as ritual events: domestic, village, and ascetic practices, a trilogy of traditional ethnographic sites of ritual reproduction whose distinction *as* traditional sites might remind one how perfectly imbricated are the disciplinary structures of anthropological analysis and the frames of New Order "tradition." Retracing the specific histories of these practices, I attempt to disclose how it is that such practices in their present form could appear far more plausible to contemporary Javanese and ethnographers than

[87] Ibid., p. 77.
[88] *Upacara Pernikahan,* p. 10.

they might have to those of Dr. Soetomo's generation. The significance of New Order discursive practice extends, of course, well beyond the walls of the Kraton Surakarta and the concrete attractions of "Beautiful Indonesia" as the subject of "Java" rearticulates itself through an everyday continuum of upacara tradisional. Indeed, my initial interest in the Kraton and Mini arose not so much from their inherent appeal as objects of cultural focus as from their status as traces of an effect referred to earlier as the Mini-ization of Java, or "Java." The effect itself would efface the distinction. Thus, while in the previous chapters, I approached this effect through a reverse history that retraced its origins back to the New Order present, in the chapters that follow, I assume an ethnographic approach that, in light of the discursive proclivities of New Order "Java," is somewhat at odds with itself. How might one critique this effect within a discourse that tends to reaffirm its cultural assumptions by recovering and recuperating that which would lie outside? These two approaches—the one historical, the other ethnographic—are so thoroughly intertwined that the subjects they define may prove virtually identical.

5

On the Practice of Wedding

Ritual Domestication in the New Order

No scene of "tradition" in contemporary Java exhibits the New Order compulsion of cultural recovery more obviously than the *upacara mantèn:* a proper wedding ritual. Newspapers regularly feature stories on such weddings, especially when they are hosted by families of senior government officials. Although these stories have much in common with those that fill society pages in other parts of the world, the Indonesian features differ from their international counterparts in two significant respects. First, their front-page status attests to a particular sense of newsworthiness attached to these weddings in New Order Indonesia. Second, media coverage devotes considerable attention to ritual detail and thus reveals a highly cultivated sense of repetition, as if one were to read, "The bride said 'I do' . . . and then gold rings were exchanged without being dropped . . . and then the groom gave his bride the obligatory kiss," and so on, repeatedly, from story to story.

News reports on Javanese weddings are by no means limited to high society affairs. Indeed, stories in Central Java's dailies regularly cover wedding customs in rural areas. "Heeey, How Relaxed!" reads the headline for a wedding "perhaps still purely tradisional" in Bedono, a tiny hamlet secluded in the hills of interior Java.[1] Coverage of tradisional

[1] *Suara Merdeka,* April 28, 1982.

weddings is so extensive that it includes, in fact, stories that range from the mildly sensational to the implicitly bizarre: Queen Juliana is honored with an "authentic wedding show" performed by Solonese aristocrat models; "Mr. Keith, the Australian, fulfills custom," from beginning to end, with his Javanese bride; a blind couple receive (upon completion of their rehabilitation program) a tradisional wedding in royal attire and RayBan sunglasses; and gamelan music accompanies the simultaneous tradisional wedding of six couples suffering from leprosy.[2] No matter whether its ritual subjects are members of Java's social elite, villagers from isolated rural areas, foreign luminaries like Queen Juliana and Mr. Keith, or rehabilitation recipients, the tradisional wedding preoccupies cultural imaginations in New Order Java.

Of all the various weddings covered by the press, the dominant scene for many rural and most urban Central Javanese—and the 1983 Mini wedding was obviously no exception—is that of an "authentic" (asli) Solonese wedding.[3] This is a terribly familiar scene in which each guest is ushered to his or her honored place, an uncomfortable straight-back chair. Stuck within the customary hierarchy represented by the ranks of chairs, guests remain seated for no less than three hours while they act as witness-observers to a schedule of events performed with near perfect predictability. At 10:08 A.M., for example, the amplified voice of a back-stage master of ceremonies begins its play-by-play narrative commentary that runs for the duration of the affair, a commentary produced in the conventional language and tone of a Javanese shadow puppeteer. By 10:29, the groom's entourage arrives to deliver the bridegroom, the "king for a day," *ratu sadina,* royally costumed from ceremonial fez on top to aristocratic batik on bottom. At 10:41, the groom proceeds down the aisle formed by the ranks of seated guests to meet his bride who has now left the velveteen throne at the opposite end of the hall. Supported by sturdy female attendants, the bride teeters tenderly toward her king. At 10:43, guests witness the ritual "betel toss" and at 10:46, the some-what awkward "egg-crushing" rite. By 10:51, the bride and groom are firmly planted on the love-seat throne from whence the bride departed. In back of the couple looms a hanging stage prop painted to represent the plush interior room of a Javanese aristocrat's house, the *krobongan,* inner sanctum of customary architecture. On each side of the couple

[2] *Suara Merdeka,* December 25, 1983; ibid., December 3, 1982; *Kompas,* June 19, 1982. The gamelan players also all suffered from leprosy.

[3] Surprisingly, this includes even the rival city Yogyakarta, where Solo-style weddings are favored.

Fig. 14. Bride and groom sit in state for a *tradisional* New Order wedding at the Kusuma Sahid Prince Hotel in 1983.

stand little girls in heavy makeup, fanning constantly with pink royal plumes. Save for a relatively brief series of subsequent rites and concluding displays of obeisance, the bride and groom sit in state, immobile, and gaze out over the rows of guests seated before them.

The guests, in turn, characteristically observe the scene by exhibiting their own air of practiced detachment. They normally do not compliment or comment on, for instance, the first course of reception food passed down the row in their direction at 11:15, the long series of formal speeches on the family's behalf at 11:32, or the medley of classical (*klasik*) dance acts scheduled from 12:01 on. Only when something in the scene looks wrong do guests really take note and comment. Such detachment is not difficult; during wedding seasons, guests are likely to be served the same food, speeches, and entertainment several times a week. At 12:50, the guests file out bearing expressions of self-satisfaction mixed with a relief that yet another thoroughly tradisional wedding has been, finally, completed.

With particular exceptions, embellishments, and modifications, this is the generalized format for an upacara mantèn in contemporary Central Java, a format most studiously observed, whether performed in the rela-

tively luxurious setting of urban reception halls or the modest home of a village host. And it is a format that incorporates significant shifts in the practice of wedding as "tradition" appears to reassert itself.

Recollections of Difference

The New Order obsession with elaborate wedding scenes devoted to fulfilling "tradition" while securing status is, to some extent, evidence of a colonial legacy. As noted in previous chapters, aristocratic weddings in colonial times conflated cultural and political authority and effectively domesticated the power of native kings in the name of "Java." When the touring Pakubuwana X encountered a groom's procession en route, the king himself was required by custom to stop, yielding way to the ceremonial "king for a day."[4] Constructed from Padmasusastra's *Tatacara* rites, a mestizo cuisine of Javanese, Dutch, and Chinese recipes, rented ornamental jewelry and kerisses, "folk" performances, and reserved seating for government officials, weddings hosted by aspiring native bureaucrats of the 1920s and 1930s in many respects prefigured their New Order counterparts.[5]

The lines of this legacy, however, are not at all wholly continuous. Returning in 1979 for retirement in New Order Java after a career appointment at the United Nations, Marbangun Hardjowirogo felt compelled to write a history of indigenous customs in light of the social changes his Solonese generation had witnessed. Not surprisingly, his "Javanese Customs and Practices" (*Adat Istiadat Jawa*) highlights the wedding ritual. Looking back at the newly independent Indonesian 1950s, Marbangun recalls: "In 1955, many changes in wedding ritual protocol were apparent if compared with weddings in 1925 [the year chosen by the author for his introductory description of an authentic Solonese wedding]. *What was obvious . . . was the disappearance of many of the feudalistic conventions* [tatanan-tatanan feodalistis] *in wedding rituals.*"[6]

[4] There was nevertheless a residue of tension in such encounters. A well-known bit of Solonese oral history recalls the occasion when Pakubuwana X not only stopped midroute but magnanimously bestowed upon his rival "king" an empowered garland of Kraton jasmine blossoms. The power of the gift turned out to be too much for the groom who, as the story goes, within hours suffered a fatal heart attack.

[5] For a description of one such wedding, see H. G. Heijting, "Een huwelijk in het Javaansche dorp," *De Indische Gids* 62 (1940): 250–60. The groom's ceremonial keris as well as the bride's jewelry were *rented* for the occasion (p. 255, n. 1).

[6] Marbangun Hardjowirogo, *Adat Istiadat Jawa* (Bandung: Padma, 1980), p. 74 (emphasis added).

"Javanese Customs" finds the state of Javanese cultural affairs in the late 1970s, however, more "encouraging." Acknowledging that many customs "from traditional times" have, alas, disappeared—the author emphasizes the culture shock Javanese experienced when kerisses and other indigenous forms of magical power seemed to fail during the revolution—Marbangun brightens with the following observation: "But strangely enough, one particular field, namely the wedding-ceremony field, is not being ignored but on the contrary is concentrating attention on ceremony, from ritual bathing to formal vows to the customary wedding, now performed so accurately and earnestly that one can say there has occurred *a renaissance* [renaissance], *a rebirth in people's awareness of the authenticity* [keaslian] *of the wedding ritual.*"[7]

Although most older Solonese probably would agree with Marbangun's assessment of the 1950s wedding scene, not all are as unreservedly enthusiastic about the recent renaissance. The comments of a retired Solonese schoolteacher suggest reservations:

> The fifties were national, a cap, plain coat, and pants or sarong. If a groom had shown up in aristocratic costume—formal batik, keris, and all that—he'd have been laughed out of the place. Fez in the fifties? Forget it. *But now it's fez times* [zaman kuluk]! What you see today is a real fashion show. Everybody wants to be placed on a pedestal. In the old [colonial Surakarta] days, everything had its place. Even ranking officials in the Kraton couldn't wear any fez they pleased. There were rules, there was a system. *But that was then, not now.*

The inherent skepticism in this and similar comments from Solo's older generation confronted with New Order "tradition" stems from the recollection of two sorts of times: the 1950s when things were no longer supposed to be, after independence, the way they had once been and the 1930s when things were, ceremonially at least, the way they supposedly had been for generations—fundamentally different from what they would become. The fifties were envisioned as a time for leaving the prewar Surakarta world behind, not so much by denying that world with its hauntingly familiar sense of order ("there was a system") as by letting go and establishing prewar times as *past* ("but that was then"). By contrast, the fifties were imagined as thoroughly modérn.

One of the more conspicuous manifestations of such modernity appeared in the form of reception halls, which first emerged in Solo in the mid-1950s. As postwar social ties produced ever larger networks of would-be guests and urban population steadily increased, reception halls

[7] Hardjowirogo, *Adat Istiadat Jawa*, p. 112 (emphasis added).

presented an attractive alternative to at-home ceremonial affairs. Solo's first large reception hall, Rose Hall (Gedung Mawar), was established in 1955.[8] The images that filled Rose Hall in the 1950s were, however, remarkably different from those that appear in the same hall in New Order times. "Extremely modern [*modérn sanget*]," recalled an older city clerk remembering his own 1957 Rose Hall nuptials:

> My wedding used the sailing-ship motif for the backdrop behind the bridal couple. It formed an allegory [*alegori*] bringing together all sorts of symbols [*lambang warni warni*]. The bride and groom, for instance, sailing into the sea of society must choose the right course or else their ship will run aground. There was a foil lighthouse too, reminding us that life's goal is still far off, and tiny foil stars to guide us there. Other folks used the [nationalist] star motif; the carriage was common too. But I preferred the sailing-ship, very popular at the time.

As old-fashioned (in its very modernity) as the sailing-ship design may now appear to Solonese in retrospect, at the time it reflected a most popular fantasy of movement, of possible social mobility. Though seated, the bride and groom were not presented as sitting "in state" in front of a royal krobongan backdrop but as headed somewhere—anywhere, perhaps, but somewhere nonetheless. Motifs like the sailing ship were obviously un-"krobongan"-like and, thus, represented a radical departure from the specifically feudal obligations associated with the krobongan's representation of conventional aristocratic house design.[9] Despite the uncertainty of their destination, what 1950s newlyweds were sailing away from in their reception-hall fantasies was immobility itself, the ideological foundation of a royal world presumably past.

With the appearance of a renaissance in the early 1970s, however, reception-hall interiors were altered and sailing-ship backdrops packed away to make room for portable krobongan, tradisional staging for what the schoolteacher called "fez times." New reception halls were built along architectural lines more obviously "Javanese," and novel demands were made on those in the ceremonial business. The owner of one of

[8] A predecessor of Gedung Mawar was a modest hall operated by Kwee Soen Hoo. Founded circa 1948, it served a totally Chinese clientele. Such halls were 1950s modern counterparts of prewar "society clubs" (*soos*) and are still commonly referred to with the Dutch-derived term *resepsi* as *gedung resepsi*.

[9] A model krobongan would have been available as an alternative decoration in 1950 reception-hall fantasies. Such replicas were already extant in the 1930s in Solonese houses that could not afford the real thing. Prewar mock krobongan were also used in villages when a household was marrying off a "daughter" not related by blood.

Solo's oldest surviving formal-wear rental enterprises recalled, for example, his puzzlement upon receiving the first order for a tradisional groom's costume of royal design:

> They ordered something like this [pointing to a male mannequin outfitted in regal fashion, with fez]. That was sometime around 1970. I was stumped. Where was I going to come up with *that?* So I called my tailor friend who used to design that sort of thing for a *kethoprak* theater group. If they'd wear it I'd supply it. Frankly, I had no idea things would go as far as they now have. It's really just acting, just bad acting. But business is not bad, not at all.[10]

By the early 1980s and the time of this recollection, business was, in fact, booming both in Solo and in Jakarta, providing a 1981 *Tempo* article, "Wedding Season Business," with a story like the following:

> On January 9, there was a large, luxurious wedding at the Jakarta Hilton International. Performers Titiek Puspa and Mus Mualim hosted the wedding of their second daughter, Ella Puspasari. The "Golden Ballroom" was considered inadequate. In the yard out front extended a large green and yellow awning.
>
> The five-star hotel received orders to cater 2,500 guests for this reception. Decorations surrounding the bridal seat were seventeen meters long. The bridal couple sat in front of a "krobongan," which in former times was permitted only at royal weddings. The bridal seat, rented for 450,000 rupiah, was in the [Central Javanese] Mataram style while the attire worn by all the bridesmaids and best men was Javanese, provided by dance troupe director Sampan Hismanto.[11]

For Solonese old enough to remember both the modérn world of the 1950s *and* the world of prewar Surakarta, contemporary moves to recover "tradition" (whether in Jakarta or elsewhere) can appear foolishly out of place; not only do New Order cultural performers seem headed in the wrong direction, backward against the historical changes the fifties were supposed to have ushered in, but they are likely to bungle things entirely—"just bad acting"—because the roles portrayed belong, with

[10] The pioneering New Order customers in this account were identified only as "bigshots from Jakarta" originally from Solo, returning home for wedding preparations.

[11] *Tempo*, January 24, 1981, p. 32. This article appears under the heading "Days Filled with Receptions" as does coverage of the Balinese counterpart, the December 8, 1980, wedding of Dr. Anak Agung Gde Putera. "This wedding will be performed with the complete traditional ritual [*upacara tradisional lengkap*]," declared the groom's father in the invitation. The cost was rumored to be thirty million rupiah.

all their complexity, to a world now past. "There were rules, there was a system. But that was then, not now." For these Solonese, the recollected world of prewar Surakarta assumes a certain appropriateness of its own in the past, a site of authenticity never again to be replicated.

For others, however, especially those of younger generations, the current renaissance appears so self-evident that the implications of difference raised in the process of recollection are effectively circumvented. As people's "awareness"—kasadaran, as Marbangun put it, the rhetorical hallmark of Indonesian *nationalist* consciousness!—of the "authenticity of the wedding ritual" is reborn, differences from the past are displaced. The past's potential appropriateness *as* past, as a time left behind, thus warps into the sense of a retrieved cultural present forever dedicated to living up to what once must have been. As this *tradisional*-ized present increasingly envelops and elides the differences suggested by the two decades from the midforties to the midsixties, it does so by the same logic that guides "Beautiful Indonesia"—the logic of the incomplete tirelessly filled in. In New Order Java one frequently encounters remarks to this effect: "With the politics and turmoil of the fifties and sixties past now, we are able to return to our Javanese customs, our ancient traditions." As one middle-aged man commented without a trace of irony: "We can all be king for a day now if we want. Such is Indonesian democracy!"

Following two decades of culture interruptus, New Order bridal couples clad in customary costume appear to be making up for lost time. Save the comments of some older Solonese and other, similar-minded skeptics, the mounting ritual evidence for an elision of recollected difference would seem *almost* (though necessarily never quite) complete. But there are, of course, other means for registering difference.

Scattered Origins 1

A Practical Detour through Regeneration

It is not really surprising that the wedding has become a focus of New Order concern with "tradition." Beyond its colonial legacy as an uniquely endowed scene for locating "Javanese" cultural identity, the practice of wedding in Central Java (as elsewhere) discloses a manner of domestication: it admits powers of procreation only to tame them for the sake of social regeneration. At one point during the conventional sequence of events that constitute a Central Javanese wedding, the groom empties the so-called *kacar-kucur*—a mix of uncooked rice, seeds, and coins—into an opened scarf laid on his bride's lap. The groom's gesture is

as much a token surrender of the material wealth necessary for establishing a new household as it is a display of procreation in process. Almost by nature, the structure of domestication built into such acts supports a more general form of domestication in New Order Java, a cultural domestication that continuously admits potentially unruly practices only to enframe them as examples of "traditional rituals" performed for the sake of an ever more "Beautiful Indonesia."

And yet, even wedding practices, concerned as they are with the sometimes unpredictable particulars of procreation, do not always fit perfectly within this framework and become altered in small but telling ways. Such is the case with the celebrated "egg-crushing" rite (*ngidak tigan*). By convention and in full view of the wedding guests, a Javanese groom steps on an egg placed under his right foot, tapping into a procreative process that presumably has worked for generations. For better or worse, the significant liquid mess occasioned by this rite is routinely avoided now as the egg itself, the "seed of life," is sealed in a transparent plastic baggie. First appearing in urban reception halls in the mid-1970s, the bagged egg is now commonly reflected upon as a sign of ceremonial refinement. But for those persons still operating by older logics of procreation and reproduction, the baggie represents ritual disaster. "No wonder city people are so confused," snapped an elderly village women in response to my inquiry about the modified egg rite, "you don't put the seed of life in a plastic bag."[12]

The force of this woman's comment derived from her years of experience as a practicing expert—a *dhukun,* or "ritual specialist" as anthropologists would have it—skilled in curing, midwifery, agricultural reproduction, and related matters concerning her rural surroundings.[13] For her, the powers of procreation inherent in wedding practices are essentially the same as those that motivate rice harvest customs. "People generally call the rice harvest practice *methik* a 'rice-stalk wedding' for Sri. You know who she is, don't you?" Without waiting for my response, the dhukun began her rendition of the well-known "Sri-Sadana" story.

The tale focuses on the adventures of Sri and her younger brother Sadana, two children of the legendary King Mahapunggung. Having come of age, Sadana obstinately refuses to follow his father's will to marry out and saves his implicitly incestuous devotion for the unwed Sri,

[12] Bu Marijana (Semangkak, Klaten).

[13] As a *dhukun mantèn* (wedding specialist), Bu Marijana carefully dissociated herself from dhukun skilled in sorcery, invulnerability, and all the other darker forces the term *dhukun* commonly calls to mind in Java. For an introduction to dhukun, see Geertz, *Religion of Java,* pp. 42, 86–91.

who is similarly inclined. Sadana is forced to leave the kingdom, and soon thereafter Sri sets out in search of her brother. The angry King Mahapunggung offers his daughter to an ogre king (should he be successful in finding her), who in turn sends out an ogre emissary equipped with a magical nose that sniffs along in dramatic pursuit. By the end of the story and several incarnations later—Sri becomes a rice paddy snake, Sadana a swallowlike bird—the heroine and hero are transformed into beneficent gods, divine siblings eternally dedicated to Java's prosperity, with Sri assuring fertility and Sadana wealth. All along the way, however, Sri instructs victims of agricultural pests, disease, and other malevolent forces summoned up by Sri's ogre adversaries in the procedures of offering preparation and related preventive measures. The "Sri-Sadana" story, as it turns out, is really a heady race through the specifics of Sri's prescriptions for rice cultivation and a fertile life. In the hands of a knowledgeable dhukun, the story is remarkably expandable.

"Rice," smiled the old woman, "you know where that comes from, don't you?" No sooner had I finished the last of my notes on Sri's formula for infant protection—lick the fontanel and navel three times, from left to right, and at night never pinch its cheeks or in any other way resemble a ghost—than the dhukun began the "Mikukuhan" story, Central Java's prevailing account of the origins of rice. This tale springs from Bathara Guru, supreme ruler of the pantheon of gods, and, in particular, from his intense desire for a mysterious jeweled vessel (*cupu manik*). Clumsy as ever, the four-armed Guru drops the vessel, which free-falls through the heavens, finally disappearing into the gaping mouth of a serpentine god below. After much fuss, the serpent coughs up his prize and out of the vessel pops the goddess Srilowati. Guru falls madly in love. Srilowati initially holds off Guru's advances by puzzling him with an esoteric bride-price demand: a gamelan orchestra named "Kethok kethopyok kepyak kethopyak," a riddle playing on the sound of bamboo rice hullers. Guru sends off emissaries in search of such a gamelan, a search that soon gives rise to subsidiary struggles among contenders for the answer. Unable to restrain himself any longer, Guru kneels in front of his goddess. But, alas, Srilowati receives her death blow as Guru inadvertently knocks her out with his imperial crown. The goddess's corpse descends to earth to the famine-ridden realm of King Mikukuh—hence the tale's title—where it is buried. From Srilowati's corpse grows a variety of Javanese crops of which the foremost is rice, sprouting as it does from the head.

"You see? It's all mbok Sri," concluded the woman, fusing the tales' heroines, Dewi Sri and Dewi Srilowati, into the familiar *mbok* (mother)

Sri, spiritual protectress for a Central Javanese world of agricultural and domestic concerns ranging from rice production to infant care. Although the puppeteer who introduced me to this dhukun took a certain philological pleasure in distinguishing various "Sri" stories and characters, for the old woman such matters were of little issue. What was significant was Sri, whose very name in Javanese is synonomous with prosperity.

Throughout Java, "Sri-Sadana" stories suggest a widespread fusion of the heroine of the rice-origin tale, Dewi Srilowati, with Dewi Sri, sister of Sadana. In Banyumas, for example, Guru wishes to bestow the seed of life on the world but fumbles, dropping it instead into the mouth of a serpent who miraculously coughs up not Srilowati, but Sri and Sadana. Guru murders Sadana out of jealousy, and when the object of Guru's desire continues to elude him, out of frustration he murders her. From Sri's corpse sprouts rice. In Sunda, Guru orders the gods to build a great hall. Unequipped for such a task, the serpent god cries. His tears transform into three eggs, one of which produces Sri; the other two produce key figures in the army of evil characters destined to plague Sri's crops. Guru's amorous advances later bring about her death, as well as a corpse sprouting with the usual significance. Along parts of Java's southern coast, a Guru-like Allah orders his angels to distribute the seed of life, who then enlist the aid of Sri, Sadana, and a seed-carrying hummingbird. Unable to bear his load, the bird falls and eventually is killed by pestilent characters.

What is striking about these and similar stories relating the origins of Javanese agriculture is that the original seed of life issuing from higher authority is *not* bestowed on the world below by means of a direct, unproblematic implantation. Nor is the seed's dissemination a direct result of some consummate coupling in the heavens; even Sri and Sadana never realize that divinely incestuous potential that so preoccupies some anthropologists. Instead, an unmanageable excess of desire—Guru's lust for Srilowati, Sadana's obsession with Sri, or Allah's own more straightforward creative intent—backfires and spills over, giving rise to a series of struggles, adversaries, and substitute identities. In the process, the world of Sri appears, agricultural reproduction takes root, and the issue of *ultimate* origin is itself scattered and displaced into obscurity.

With this issue of origins in mind, I return now to the dhukun's earlier comment, which gave rise to thoughts concerning the origins of rice and reproduction—"People generally call the rice harvest practice *methik* a 'rice-stalk wedding' for Sri"—and I do so, in turn, as a means of eventually recalling my original point of departure, wedding practices. As in the Sri tales, in the act of methik Sadana plays at best a marginal role. Indeed,

despite this harvest practice's gloss as a "rice-stalk wedding," more often than not the "groom" is entirely absent.

A day or two before the general rice harvest, children accompany the dhukun to a particularly fertile section of rice paddy. Armed with offerings, incense, and a small blade, the informal procession circles the paddy field once, clockwise, and then heads for the center where a tiny plot of one square meter or so becomes the methik's focal point. Here the dhukun spreads out the central offering, a flattened roast chicken with accompaniments, and recites a mantra instructing the spirit mbok Sri not to be unnerved by the steel blade that will take her. The dhukun then cuts several handfuls of stalks and braids them together, weaving in fragrant blossoms that transform the braided rice-stalks into Sri the "bride." Wrapped in batik, shaded by a small parasol of the sort used for protecting infants, and cradled in the dhukun's arms, Sri is finally taken home and placed in the house of the rice field's owner where weekly offerings will be made on her behalf. Here she remains until the seeds of her dried figure are later added to others for planting in subsequent seasons and another newly constructed rice-stalk Sri replaces her. The rice contained in the figure is never consumed. To do so would mean that one had joined the ranks of Sri's enemies: an army of rodents, birds, insects, and other predators that feed directly on her, bringing disaster to the fields. Instead, the seeds of the Sri figure are reserved and eventually planted, repeating the process of agricultural abundance that sprouted, in the stories, from Sri(lowati)'s body.

Sadana's absence at the rice-stalk wedding is the result, in part, of the possibility that his significance is already braided into the Sri figure. The specific number of stalks chosen for the figure is determined by doubling the divinational numerical significance associated with the harvest day. A reckoning of ten, say, produces ten *pairs* of stalks for braiding. Be that as it may, dhukun rarely speak in terms of Sri-Sadana couples, but in numbers of stalks, and what finally emerges is not called a Sri-Sadana figure, but simply Sri.[14] Moreover, given the Sri figure's multiple roles across generations as mbok Sri (mother), adorned Sri (bride), and cradled Sri (infant), the single figure itself exceeds the ritual framework of bride-groom metaphors. Braided into Sri thus is a process of generation that pertains equally to the domains of human reproduction and agricultural reproduction. For in both domains the Sri figure indi-

[14] Only two out of the twelve methik rites I saw performed in the 1980s included a pair of figures; in one of these rites, a pair of identical figures were placed at each of the four corners of the rice field.

cates increment: in the former, the figure assumes multiple roles intertwined in regeneration; in the latter, the figure presents a marked surplus whereby rice withheld from one harvest ensures abundance in the next. Within the practice of methik and the figure of Sri, the human/agricultural distinction itself disappears as the promise of surplus is established.

At a certain point during the methik process—just after the Sri figure has been braided in the field—the dhukun signals the children to divide up the central offering among themselves. This is the moment that so attracts children to methik. In an instant they scramble to get their hands on some part of the offering, aiming most of their energies at the roast chicken, the real prize of this little struggle known as a *rebutan.* This contest for the chicken—to rebut always implies a struggle among rivals over something, characteristically an object of power, for example, magically charged droppings left behind by the Kraton's albino water buffalo or, in times past, the Kraton throne itself—is at once half-joking, half-serious, yet inevitably intense and over in a flash. From the children's point of view, the methik rite is finished as soon as the central offering is gone and subsidiary offerings are scattered to cardinal forces at the four corners of the rice field.[15]

Dhukun stress that the central offering is *exchanged* for the rice stalks that later become Sri. Without such an exchange, the methik rite would not, they say, produce fertile results. For methik practices operate through a critical exchange that yields, on the one hand, rice stalks that by a series of substitutions are transformed into Sri and, on the other hand, the grounds for a rebutan struggle that instantaneously replays the conditions that made Sri(lowati)'s sprouting corpse possible. Juxtaposed in practice are two generative logics: one works by substitution and reserves seeds for transformation into a sign of surplus; the other works through the unbridled (one is tempted to say unbridal-ed) process of dissemination inherent in rebutan contestation whose scattering impulse gives rise to the very preconditions of reproduction. Sri's world, thus, is motivated not so much by the mutual incorporation of these two logics into a singular source of generation as by their periodic juxtaposition. Rather than ritually representing the origins of rice as if they were mythologically contained in Sri(lowati) stories, methik practices *reproduce* the disseminative implications of those stories where the issue of ultimate origin is itself scattered. In the process, methik practices reproduce,

[15] It is said that boys who do not scatter the subsidiary offerings (*bucalan*) as prescribed but instead keep these offerings for themselves manifest impeded growth by going bald.

moreover, not only rice but the means by which humans, too, may be reproduced. For to speak of weddings, as the dhukun demonstrated, is to speak of rice-stalk weddings and, thus, to speak of practices of surplus and rebutan contestation in which the groom may not, in fact, reign as king.

Scattered Origins 2
Surplus, Contestation, Domestication

"For preparing a wedding," the dhukun continued, "I have all sorts of *ngèlmu*" (esoteric "knowledge," from theoretical abstractions behind magical formulas and cosmological designs to concrete manifestations in the form of empowered objects), citing a litany of mantras, charms, herbal potions, amulets, and other practical specifics. "I fast for three days. This makes the connection between the bride and mbok Sri possible. Then I bathe the bride and recite a mantra." (The dhukun summarily raced through this incantation, addressed to Sri, in such high-speed Javanese that she could be assured that I would be convinced of her possession of this particular formula without stealing the secrets of her trade.)[16] "I apply red juices from betel nut to the bride's lips, ground roasted cloves to the eyebrows, and *boreh* [a yellowish compound of powdered leaves and flower petals] to the body. The powder is rubbed in, not painted on. My brides don't dissolve with sweat like so many brides today do. My brides *glow*."

It is just this glow (*pamor*), exhibiting as it does an aura of empowered form similar to that associated with keris blades, that establishes the dhukun's bride as an embodiment of active ngèlmu, a Sri-like figure of surplus. Like the rice-stalk bride, this bride is constructed as an indication of increment. On the eve of the wedding, the dhukun thus places the bride in the same interior room of the bride's home where Sri rice figures are kept. Here, the bride's nocturnal vigil attracts female spirits (wida-

[16] For a representative mantra of this sort, see *Adat Istiadat Daerah Jawa Tengah* (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1981), p. 72. The Department of Education and Culture's translation of the mantra from (Low) Javanese into Indonesian is telling. Although the Low Javanese is cast in language of command, the Indonesian translation begins, "I humbly beseech God that [the bride] be bathed in water from heaven [mohon kepada Tuhan, agar dimandikan air dari surga]," and so on. Not only does the translation bear little relation to the Javanese original but it is switched into a sort of High Indonesian that transforms the discourse of cosmological command into a language of pure supplication.

dari, hence this practice is referred to as midadarèni) that reinforce her radiance, and the process of substitution that transforms the bride into a figure of Sri is completed.

On the following day, juxtaposed to this completed process of substitution and its resultant sign of Sri are the numerous discrete practices that comprise a productive wedding or *temu* (literally, meeting or encounter) of the bride and groom. For most dhukun, a half-dozen such practices are considered essential for the process of wedding, practices that range from formal acts of exchange that give rise to mildly contestatory scenes of dispersal to more direct portrayals of dissemination. In the first of these acts, two offerings constructed in the form of bushy flowering plants called *kembar mayang* (a pair of blossoming plants) are exchanged on the bride and groom's behalf.[17] Rather than consolidating differences—whereby male and female plants would be metaphorically united—these *identical* mock plants remain undifferentiated signs of productive growth ripe for dissemination and are placed in the interior room where the bride and groom themselves are seated or, as dhukun term it, "planted." Immediately after the wedding, the plants are tossed out at a crossroads where the intermingled fruits of their construction are scattered to the cardinal directions with children struggling to make off with whatever they can. Activating signs of increment through acts of scattering, kembar mayang practices confirm the promise of offspring by the same means that activates agricultural production.[18]

The link between human and agricultural reproduction is reaffirmed in the second practice by which the bride and groom are wed as the couple steps into and over a water buffalo yoke placed on the threshold of the entrance to the bride's home where the wedding is held. Although many villagers today interpret this act as a demonstration of "cooperation"

[17] Kembar mayang (also commonly referred to as *kembang mayang*, "blossoming flowers") occasionally are presented in two or four pairs. Each of the identical mock blossoming plants is formed by coconut fronds (shaped to resemble kerisses, whips, and birds) attached to a banana tree log base, and filled out with clusters of banyan leaves, jasmine flowers, a ripe pineapple, a sprouting young coconut, and other manifestations of flowering abundance.

[18] The New Order's Department of Education and Culture, which tends to skirt indigenous reproductive explanations, notes that "the kembar mayang offer a metaphor for 'sex' education": the bride is a "flower" and the groom wants to "inhale her pollen" (*Adat dan Upacara Perkawinan Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta* [Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1978–79], p. 51.) Clifford Geertz notes that the kembar mayang exchange "symbolizes the mutual relinquishment of virginity by the bride and groom" (*Religion of Java*, p. 58). Although Geertz's informants tend to speak in terms of virginity (and its loss), most Central Javanese I interviewed spoke rather of offspring, of anticipated proliferation.

(*rukun*) on the bridal couple's behalf—neither bride nor groom tugs ahead of the other—the practice still retains some of its associations with Sri's reproductive process. On the yoke often are inscribed divinational chalk marks that pertain equally to human reproduction (the marks protect the anticipated newborn offspring from spirits and disease) and agricultural reproduction (the same marks protect the fertility of a newly plowed field). The fact that a yoke recently used at weddings is considered particularly desirable for use in the fields is supplemented by a precaution that requires that a sarong cloth recently used by the bride be placed just under the yoke. As proof that the bride is not menstruating (that is, not temporarily unfertile), the cloth assures that sickness will not afflict plow animals and that the fields will maintain their productivity.[19]

More than a metaphor for cooperation, the yoke works as a sign of generalized production in which human and agricultural domains are interdependent. Yet, standing on the threshold between agricultural and social concerns, the yoke's very form makes glosses of domesticized cooperation conceivable, perhaps even bearable, as the implications of fertile domestication give way to those of "traditional" domestication in New Order Java.[20] There are, however, certain creative exceptions to such a shift. In Bayat, for example, a well-known batik-producing district of southwest Klaten, a rack (*gawangan*) used for supporting batik-in-process occasionally replaces the yoke for the threshold practice. Lying outside the field of domestication and submissiveness facilitated by the water buffalo yoke, the batik rack affirms the sense that what is at stake in wedding practices is not cooperation per se, but production.

After crossing the yoke, the bride and groom are led inside the house for two additional practices performed still standing before they are planted in the house's interior room. In the first, the bride and groom toss small sachets of betel nut at one another, an act said to determine domestic power: the one who hits the other will dominate domestic matters in the future. Although grooms now tend to win in this ministruggle—the toss as performed by New Order brides is characteristically half-hearted—dhukun note that formerly the betel fight was more inspired as befits an act of encounter between rivals in the process of proliferation.[21]

[19] In Sragen, a cow yoke is used because cows are faster plow animals than water buffalo and imply faster results.

[20] I return to the transformation by which Sri's reproductive practices were divorced from "Javanese" wedding rites. It should be noted here, however, that even nineteenth-century Kraton weddings could appeal to agriculturally endowed signs by requiring aristocratic grooms to appear with hoe in hand ("Journal of an Excursion," pp. 16–17).

[21] Augusta de Wit recorded an early twentieth-century village wedding in which the bride's betel smacks the groom right in the face (*Java: Facts and Fantasies* [The Hague: W. P.

In the second practice, the "seed of life" egg is crushed. Like the betel toss, the egg practice has shifted toward a demonstration of the bride's submissiveness with the groom now customarily doing the crushing and the bride obediently washing and toweling down the groom's foot afterward. Dhukun recall a past when *both* bride and groom crushed the egg together and the officiating dhukun inundated the bridal couple's feet with a consecrated mix of flower petals and water.[22] The practice, according to dhukun, enacts a process of dissemination by which the seed of life cracks into a sort of primordial ooze whose powers of proliferation spread with the flow of consecrated water. "If you want a lot of children," advised a dhukun from Wonogiri, "you don't mop up afterwards."

The final pair of practices occur once the bride and groom are seated inside. The first, in which the kacar-kucur mix of uncooked rice, seeds, and money is poured by the groom into the bride's lap, is the most explicit demonstration of seeds spraying forth in proliferation. For the second (and final of the half-dozen temu practices), the bride and groom spoon-feed (*ndulangi*) one another as one would feed an infant in anticipation of offspring. Some dhukun claim that this last act is a transformation of an older practice in which a whole roast chicken is *rebut*-ed by the bride and groom, each of whom takes hold of a leg and tugs until the prize splits apart. By the same reasoning that guides rebutan in rice-harvest methik, the struggle over the roast chicken sets in gear a process of dissemination that ensures production.[23]

As is suggested by this brief summary of wedding and related practices, the logics that would regenerate a fertile rural world in contemporary Java—what one is tempted to call, almost nostalgically, a world of Sri—have themselves fragmented and become scattered by the very force of "tradition" that would appear to enframe them. That is, the dissemina-

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van Stockum, 1912], p. 287). By contrast, at the 1983 wedding of an administrative underling, the district head of Kebumen gave a speech urging that the betel toss be altered and changed into an orderly ritual of quiet exchange. This, he maintained, would mirror domestic cooperativeness (*kegotong-royangan*). In Sunda, the reproductive potential of betel nut is made explicit. In the *ngeuyeuk seureuh* practice, the betel nut is formed into two kinds, *lungkun* and *tektek*, respectively representing male and female genitalia; these are then pressed together so that they "meet."

[22] In the early 1980s, only once (in a village on Java's south coast) did I see both groom and bride crush the "seed of life" egg. In Banyumas and Sunda, this combined effort apparently is more common. Several Central Javanese villagers claimed that formerly the woman did the crushing. In all cases, it is the dhukun who pours the water, not the bride. This is still the rule in rural Central Java today.

[23] During the 1980s, I saw such a practice twice in villages; both times it did not replace the dulangan but directly followed it.

tive implications of Sri's origins—implications that render the issue of origins itself highly problematic—seem to have exceeded the possibilities contained by a cultural renaissance articulated within a framework of explicitly "ritual" (following Asad) representation and interpretation. For what remains are isolated traces of agricultural and social reproductive practices activated by periodically juxtaposing signs of increment with rebutan struggles of dispersal and supplementary acts of dissemination, traces lying at the edges of New Order discursive comprehension, traces of surplus thus most liable to recuperation for the sake of "Beautiful Indonesia" diversity or to ritual circumvention of their unlicensed difference. The disappearance, through circumvention, of many of these practices is relatively recent. As high-yield varieties of rice introduced in the 1970s altered the face of Central Javanese agricultural reproduction, methik practices, for example, simply lost their object of desire. "When we tried using the new [shorter-stemmed] rice stalks to braid Sri, her neck was missing. She came out looking like a dwarf," recalled a farmer from Boyolali in 1983, "so we didn't bother with it anymore."

The fragmenting of Sri's world began, of course, long before the appearance of the New Order. During the late colonial period, Surakarta wedding scenes of the sort inscribed in Padmasusastra's *Tatacara* were already pruning away certain excesses. The bushy potential of kembar mayang offerings was reduced, transforming the plants into decorative bouquets; the disseminative associations of betel nut and eggs were interpreted in newly domestic terms of connubial loyalty; the dhukun's specialized powers of ngèlmu were marginalized; and the power of proliferation inherent in acts of rebutan struggle was by-passed in favor of the more contained, relatively benign sense of customary orderliness dramatized, as it were, in sit-down scenes of cultural tranquility.[24]

The historical contours of the domestication of rural practices in Central Java such as those associated with Sri become increasingly obvious as one moves farther away from the old realm of Surakarta, beyond the immediate effects that tatacara (along with *Tatacara*) registered. In the south coast region of Banyumas, for example, one still encountered in the 1970s the *bégelan,* a practice associated with the wedding of an eldest daughter. Here, the groom's entourage en route to the bride's house shoulders a portable wooden frame of the sort used by itinerant peddlers, an *angkring* to which is fastened various household utensils. This procession is suddenly stopped by one Mister Bégel, a roguish character who

[24] That is, scenes of slamet, or "well-being." I turn to slametan practices, the most ethnographically celebrated of all Javanese rites, in Chapter 6.

demands the angkring with all its loot. Following an exchange of insults and threats between Bégel and the groom's attendants, a fight breaks out and the Bégel cuts the angkring cords releasing the goods. At once, spectators (mostly neighbors and kin of the bride) scramble for the goods in a rebutan struggle, for the utensils later serve as amulets (*jimat*) for increasing the fertility of fields and livestock.[25] Although similar events still occasionally occur in rural Java, particularly along the south coast, the once multiple practices for wedding involving moments of rebutan contestation and other active techniques of dissemination are increasingly scarce.[26]

The history of the vanishing of Sri in Java thus reveals a certain shift, as noted earlier, through which a form of domestication inherent in weddings and related practices coincides with the domesticating potential of "Java" that enframes and contains practices within a singular figure of cultural identity, a figure that would, eventally, express itself through "ritual." This figure would prove categorically intolerant of the prolific forces presented by rebutan struggles and similar moments of contestation. For such moments appear only to threaten the presumed foundation of cultural order upon which "Java" rests. Focusing its gaze on the wedding ritual as a dominant image of cultural authority, the subject of "Java" would produce so many kings-for-a-day and transform the possibilities of Sri into newly domesticated ideals of obedience, loyalty, virginal purity, cooperation, and other everyday expressions of a replicable order of things. By the 1950s, although active alternatives were still scattered throughout Java, Clifford Geertz's Javanese, for example, were interpreting weddings primarily in terms of loss of virginity and domestic obedience rather than along more fertile lines.[27] But it is in New Order

[25] For a good description of a mid-1960s bégelan, see Naniek Kasrijah, "Adat Perkawinan Didaerah Banjumas" (B.A. thesis, Universitas Gajah Mada, 1968), pp. 25–29, 48–49.

[26] In an explicitly agriculturally inspired practice called "herding grandchildren" (*angon putu*), grandparents equipped with little whips ceremoniously guide their brood to market where rebuted coins are used for token purchases. This practice is now in revival among New Order Solonese elite, as is the alleged wedding practice *adol dhawet* (selling dhawet) in which children rebut play money (roof tile shards) and then use the money to buy dhawet drink sold by the bride's parents. (Some farmers from Klaten and Boyolali note that this practice actually pertains only to the occasion of goats giving multiple birth—the shards indicating prolific multiplicity—and looks completely ridiculous at weddings.) In both of these rites, contemporary Solonese avoid scenes of rebutan; the "money" is distributed in an orderly fashion to grateful queued-up children, one by one.

[27] The somewhat exaggerated emphasis placed upon virginity in Geertz's analysis derives, perhaps, either from the particular moral taste of Modjokutonese or from villagers' efforts at acceptably polite explanations.

times, in the wake of the fifties and sixties and in light of the wedding ritual's assumed renaissance, that the subject of "Java" has realized its domesticating potential and extended its reach so compellingly to incorporate household practices. And with the extension of the subject of "Java" come many who would apparently, with customary enthusiasm, fully submit.

Wedding Subjects, Wedding Authorities

In *The Religion of Java,* Clifford Geertz introduces his chapters on birth, circumcision and wedding, and death rites with the following comment: "Javanese rites of passage describe an arc running from the fussy, detailed little gestures surrounding birth to the large, often rather elaborate feasts and entertainments accompanying circumcision and marriage to the muted, emotionally constricted rituals of death. . . . The rites emphasize both the continuity and the underlying identity of all aspects of life and the special transitions and phases through which it passes."[28]

On such matters, standard Surakarta interpretation is uncharacteristically succinct: *metu, mantu, mati,* a three-word phrase that plays on variations of the Javanese script characters *ma* and *ta* and translates roughly as "hatched, matched, and dispatched."[29] The assumption of an identity projected through life-cycle rituals appears to have emerged in Java, as observed in Chapter 3, around the turn of the century. In *Tatacara,* Padmasusastra narrated the life of a generalized "Javanese person" (tiyang Jawi) through a story tracing the trajectory of a completed "Javanese" life from birth rites to wedding to funeral. Heightening the cultural awareness of other, variously manifested early twentieth-century "Javanese" figures, such a character was discovered, as noted, busy at work reclaiming customary identity in the form of a ritual subject, just the sort of subject that would eventually find its place in rites of passage analyses. The "hatched, matched, dispatched" formula was firmly rooted in Surakarta interpretation by the 1930s and has flourished since.

Rather at odds with this formula for life is another view on domestic practices, a view still perceptible although by no means dominant in Central Java today. Responding to my inquiries concerning rituals, one villager introduced his comments on the subject this way:

[28] Geertz, *Religion of Java,* p. 38.

[29] I am indebted to Katherine Bergeron for this English equivalent current among Catholic religious officials.

> You're researching rituals, right? Well, there're birth rituals, they're *everywhere* around here: birthing rites, the one-week rite, thirty-five day, and so on. Then there are customary circumcisions [*supitan*], including ones for the girls too [*tetesan*]. Ah, then there comes the wedding, complete. After that the seventh-month pregnancy rite, then another birth, and it starts all over again [he concluded with a grin]. Oh yes, there're also death rituals: the funeral, the one-week rite, forty-day, hundred-day, one year, two, and the thousand-day rite. That's when the tombstone is erected. That's it.

The reasoning behind this assessment derives from two largely independent domains of practices: those designed (with Sri) for proliferation, on the one hand, and those associated (through Javanese Islamic observances) with death and memorialization, on the other.[30] Practices concerning birth, circumcision, wedding, pregnancy, then birth again, proliferate ad infinitum as signs of increment. The opening comment—"There're birth rituals, they're *everywhere* around here"—initates a process of cycling that inevitably "starts all over again," always producing yet more. But then funeral practices—"Oh yes, there're also death rituals"—suddenly are recalled to oppose such fertile cycling. This opposition works in two ways: it symmetrically balances practices of proliferation with a customary funeral cycle all its own and, at the same time, counters the whole prolific business by erecting a tombstone, an icon of memorialization that promises closure. Instead of envisioning a "Javanese person" as the uniform ritual construct that progresses, as it were, from birth to death, this reasoning imagines its subject as fundamentally divided, informed by two very different domains of practice, each informed by its own customary cycle and officiating specialist. Rather than representing, through ritual, an underlying cultural figure, the practices themselves are highlighted in a way that would not subject their figures to the ontological weight of a singular identity.

To begin to appreciate just how inappropriate such an assessment may be to modern formulations of "Javanese" identity, one must consider yet another Central Javanese practice of wedding that further informed the transformation of weddings from scenes of proliferation into tradisional displays of domestic loyalty, cooperation, subservience, and so on.[31]

[30] The incorporation of circumcision practices into the expanded domain of Sri becomes plausible if one recalls that these events, in practice, are treated much like weddings.

[31] In this context, van Gennep's aversion to fertility-based interpretations of wedding rites is worth noting. "Up to now . . . marriage ceremonies have come to be viewed only as rites which are prophylactic, cathartic, and fertility-inducing. A reaction against this simplification is needed, since its narrowness will be apparent to anyone who reads with care a

Before the temu "encounter," the groom goes to the office of a recognized Islamic official for the *ijab*, a brief contractual event that acknowledges and registers the marriage under Islamic law. In the past, the bride was not present for this event but was represented by her legal guardian (wali) for the signing of the marriage contract. In contemporary Java, however, it is common for both the bride and groom to attend whether it is held in the official's office or, as is increasingly the case for village weddings, at the home of the bride. Indeed, the ijab can now be performed immediately before the temu in full view of the assembled temu guests as an introduction to an extended ritual event. Brought together into congruence, the two domains of practice that might separately empower the ijab and temu (respectively, Islamic law and the techniques of Sri) are *themselves* effectively wedded as they become subsumed under a broader rubric of "Javanese ritual tradition."[32]

But there is more. In colonial times, at the ijab the groom was obliged to perform the *sungkeman* to seated male authorities, an act of obeisance whereby one kneels in devotion with palms pressed together in front of the face and thumbs approaching the nose in prayerlike position and then leans forward as if kissing the seated person's knees. At a 1916 wedding in the Priangen district, for example, C. F. H. Dumont described a sungkeman characteristic of the period with the groom "kissing the knees" of his prospective father-in-law, the Islamic official, and several attending elders, including Dumont. "This moment was really very moving," Dumont recorded.[33] In the 1950s, the same pattern prevailed at ijab events, particularly for aristocratic marriages, although in villages the sungkeman apparently was in decline. In Geertz's description of Modjokuto weddings, for example, the sungkeman is completely absent. With the New Order, however, acts of sungkeman have returned with real force, and they have done so now fully incorporated into the "traditional wedding" format as a final climactic rite coming at the end of the temu

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detailed description of the marriage ceremonies of civilized or semicivilized people" (*Rites of Passage*, p. 117).

[32] There is, nevertheless, a certain tension between the ijab and temu when they coincide. Village Islamic officials performing the ijab at the bride's house frequently attempt to upstage the temu by sermonizing at length.

[33] Ch. F. H. Dumont, "Huwelijksgebruiken op Java," *Nederlandsch Indië Oud & Nieuw* 1 (1916): 349. Here the sungkeman act is referred to as *ngaras* (kniekus). At a 1928 Tulung Agung wedding, L. D. Petit refers to the same act as *ngujung*. For this wedding, the groom was required to repeat this gesture later at the temu. See L. D. Petit, "Javaansche Huwelijksfeesten," *Nederlandsch Indië Oud & Nieuw* 15 (1930): 59.

Fig. 15. Wedding *sungkeman* at the Kusuma Sahid Prince Hotel, 1983.

sequence when *both* bride and groom bow before a host of assembled family elders and guest authorities.

In Solo of the 1980s, a half-dozen seated figures awaiting their share of respect was a familiar sight at the conclusion of weddings. The groom, followed by the bride, kneels at the feet of an elder and, bowing, slowly leans forward as if kissing the elder's knees. Each sungkeman gesture takes several minutes to execute, requiring as it does that one approaches and departs from the elder's chair by means of the constricting *ndhodhok* maneuver, a sort of ambulatory squatting, and remain poised at the elder's feet for a respectful time. The entire round of sungkeman becomes a lengthy process as both groom and bride take turns displaying respect. Dramatizing the tradisional subjectivity assumed by New Order weddings more vividly than any other single gesture, sungkeman presents brides and grooms with the moment they are most likely to demonstrate their loss of control by quietly weeping, a loss of composure usually avoided by Central Javanese under other circumstances. In the 1980s, Sakura film advertisments regularly featured a young Javanese bride with hands folded in respect, her face adorned by a photogenic tear.

The printed program prepared by the Soehartos for the 1983 wedding

at Mini offers the following special insight concerning this most apparently personal of ritual acts: "'Sungkeman': A traditional moral duty [*kewajiban moraal tradisional*] for the bridal couple in which, with special gestures, they physically display their respect, outer and inner, to their parents and elders."[34]

The Soeharto definition is instructive on several counts. First, no mention is made of blessings received for the respect (*hormat*) paid. Other scenes of sungkeman—for example, acts of supplication at the graves of parents or figures of spiritual power or for observances at the end of the Moslem fasting month—are performed with the explicit aim of receiving blessings (*pangèstu*). Wedding sungkeman, however, are executed primarily as self-reflexive displays of respect. Although there are, no doubt, resonances of promised blessings contained in wedding sungkeman, the fact that a wedding presents a severing of ties with one's parents *without* the guarantee of an immediate return (unlike a Javanese funeral where the deceased is immediately imagined as a source of blessings), underscores the status of this sungkeman as a form of absolute respect, a gesture of subjection that appears to reflect at length on little more than its own prostrating posture, idealized in the presence of authority.[35]

The second, related insight of the Soeharto definition of sungkeman concerns its appeal to "traditional moral duty" (*kewajiban moraal tradisional*). The phrase "moral duty" itself would have adequately defined the basis for the authority of elders and others who require shows of respect. Indeed, within the discursive space between the Arabic/Malay term *wajib* (duty) and the Dutch derived *moraal* (moral) resides a profoundly rooted colonial source of social obligation and commissioned responsibility. The quite novel "*tradisional* moral duty," however, refashions the sense of moral duty by framing it within the unyielding demands of "tradition." Just as the redundancy within the phrase "traditional ritual" (upacara tradisional) discloses the process by which "ritual" becomes naturalized and achieves a certain logical priority, "traditional moral duty" assumes a life all its own. Subjecting themselves to the protocol of sungkeman, the bride and groom not only demonstrate their respect for the authorities seated before them but bow, as if involuntarily, to the authority of "tradition" itself.

It is precisely such an authority that demands, of course, not only prostration of bridal couples but equal devotion on the part of those who

[34] *Upacara Pernikahan,* p. 44.

[35] For a critical analysis of the image of the deceased and the position of pangèstu at Javanese funerals, see James T. Siegel, *Solo in the New Order: Language and Hierarchy in an Indonesian City* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 257–76.

would ritually command at wedding proceedings, the parents of the bride. And with this responsibility necessarily come fears (recalling those anticipated in *Tatacara*) that some small detail might be overlooked, that the wedding scene might appear incomplete (*kurang lengkap*) leaving "tradition" itself essentially unsatisfied. To counter such fears, bridal parents invariably organize a formal planning committee (*panitya*), which, particularly in the context of luxury weddings, involves considerable attention of its own. At a meeting in preparation for his daughter's wedding at Solo's deluxe Kusuma Sahid Prince Hotel (the refurbished mansion of Prince Kusumayuda, a son of Pakubuwana X) in 1983, for example, one host ready for retirement from a lucrative series of career positions in New Order tax departments throughout Java worried at length over the authenticity of the upcoming event.[36] "We want this to be classic (klasik), not like some of the jokes you see nowadays; you know, serious," he reminded the committee. "The palm fronds must be Javanese, not Balinese like the ones we saw at a Jakarta wedding last week. And don't forget the orchids; they'll arrive from Jakarta soon. How about the offerings?" A Kusuma Sahid representative immediately began rattling off all the items to be contributed by the hotel, including an offering intended, although "not guaranteed," to ward off rain. "And the krobongan offering, don't forget that either," and so on through a long series of don't-forgets that would haunt the bride's parents, from start to finish, for a wedding involving fifteen hundred guests, seventy-five relatives and friends serving as ushers, fifty performers, a dozen photographers, six video-cameramen, and well over one hundred waiters, in addition to an army of decoration designers, musicians, cooks, guards, and miscellaneous servants. The cost approached 16 million rupiah.

Stimulating as these fears of the incomplete are, they rarely fail to produce a scene perceived, from the host's *retrospective* point of view, as totally adequate. At a follow-up committee meeting, the parents happily declared their daughter's wedding a "sukses." One of the more striking features of urban reception-hall weddings is the host-father's high visibility of just the sort observed by the First Lady at the Mini wedding: "'Father Harto' is always the one who organizes events." This visibility represents a significant shift from the common practice whereby the host-father withdraws from the wedding scene as if absent. "He who 'has

[36] This host decided on Solo as the wedding site not only because he considered himself originally from the city but, as he put it, "because Solo is the center of authenticity [*pusat keaslian*]." This was in spite of the fact that he now resided in Yogyakarta.

work to do' [a Javanese host's obligation in wedding practices is conventionally expressed in terms of "having work to do," *duwé gawé*] is like a dead man," noted one villager, echoing a sentiment still widespread. Absented from the ritual, the host depends largely on the efforts of neighbors and kin. The relative success of "work done" thus reflects on the status of the host: the more smoothly the work goes, the greater the implicit spiritual reach, it is said, of the invisible figure behind the scenes. (Such a rationale, perhaps, derived from the inherent contradiction in colonial times of a Javanese commoner charged with the awkward task of performing as a magnanimous host.) Placed in a role of ritual command, the host conveniently avoids the social spotlight by playing dead. Efforts at raising one's social status are thus made discreetly and indirectly as if one naturally deserved the tribute paid him by others.[37]

With the New Order renaissance of "tradition," however, the dead are reborn. When the moment came for the Kusuma Sahid Prince Hotel wedding's introductory welcoming speech—the *atur nuwun,* normally made by a friend of the family while the male host stands sheepishly to one side looking as humble as possible—the host-father spoke on his own behalf. Later, he advised me that this gesture was more "efficient" (*efisien*), letting the guests know that he assumed responsibility "consistent" (*konsekwen*) with his position as ritual commander. The special appeal of contemporary bureaucratic terms such as *efisien* and *konsekwen* became evident as the host continued: "You see, someone who 'has work to do' [that is, who becomes a host] is like the head of a department. You give commands and then wait to see that they're executed properly, that the orders are passed on to someone else. It's a pity that office work doesn't run as smoothly as these ceremonies do!"

What emerges from this account (and uniformly similar comments on ceremonial work from other tradisionally upwardly mobile Central Javanese) is the image of a formal chain of command ideally cast within a ritual frame. The Kusuma Sahid host-father was indeed constantly busy making refined hand signals to a loyal staff of workers who, in turn, passed on the given command. When the 1983 Solonese guests at a grandiose *ruwatan* ceremony—a form of exorcism intended to rid one's offspring of the spiritual ill effects of having few, if any, siblings, although in this case billed as a *reward* for achieving the government's Family Planning ideal of only two children—began to get wind of the substantial

[37] See Ward Keeler, *Javanese Shadow Plays, Javanese Selves* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987), pp. 157–64, for an analysis of the Javanese host's conventional silence.

droppings from chickens and ducks necessitated by a tradisional offering, the host, assistant to the governor of Central Java, gave the signal. Ten minutes later, after the passing of his command, a lowly servant in a coolie outfit appeared with an aerosol can of Glade air-freshener and saturated the entire offering—fowl, food, droppings, and all—with clouds of piney scent. The potentially disruptive mess had been properly "Glade-ed" (*dipun-Gladaken*) to the commanding host's obvious satisfaction.

In the idiom of ritual work in New Order Java, a structure of authority is now customarily projected; this projection reflects, in turn, what is taken as the ritualized sukses of a working bureaucracy. But such projections and reflections—whether from the vantage of host-commanders or from that of prostrated bridal couples who would, someday, command such respect—depend, of course, on the attention of guests, or at least their willingness to sit through several immobilized hours of increasingly all-too-familiar tradisional exercises.

Recapturing Attentions

Once, while sitting through a routinely uneventful village wedding, I attempted some salvage ethnography by asking a man in his seventies seated next to me about wedding rituals in the past. "Chairs, there weren't any," retorted the old man. At the time I was taken aback by the peculiar specificity of the answer and tried again along more conventional anthropological lines. "Right, but how about the offerings and their meanings?" The villager remained unmoved: "Chairs, that's the big difference." After a rambling description of domestic scenes past—scenes of wedding where neighbors and kin relaxed on rattan mats gambling, gossiping, and storytelling the night away—the old man matter-of-factly concluded in favor of chairs. Their advantage is a practical one, he maintained: they place a time limit on rituals. A wedding now ends with a closing speech directed at the rows of seated guests, who then must leave. "After three hours," the man concluded, "everyone is ready to stand up and file out."

In the meantime, the apparent willingness of guests to bear witness to New Order "tradition" is very much underpinned by the well-ordered rows of chairs in which those invited to a wedding are seated and dutifully observed as guests as they themselves observe the wedding scene unfolding before them. From the late eighteenth century on, European-style straight-back chairs served as a ceremonial foundation for Javanese

court life by providing a refined system of arrangement (tatanan) for an increasingly immobilized palace. From the early nineteenth century on, palace regulations slowly extended seating privileges to an expanding show of loyal guests. At reception hall *and* village at-home weddings in the 1980s, all guests enjoyed, as it were, this privilege.

Along with the customary hierarchy represented by the ranks of chairs—a hierarchy which ranges from the highly refined arrangements of elite affairs to the somewhat more loosely formulated arrangements of village scenes in which the local headman and a few assorted elders take front row seats, leaving most of the rest open to others—comes a degree of status jockeying for position as guests arrive. A welcoming usher's primary job is to deposit guests in an appropriate row as discreetly and quickly as possible.[38] Once seated, however, guests do *not* relocate. As guests, they immediately assume an air of detachment punctuated only occasionally by the arrival of reception food in their rows or by routine comments to fellow guests seated nearby. During the several hours that guests are immobilized, an aura of poised distraction—half amused, half indifferent, totally impassive—reigns.[39] Beyond the promise of status representation, the power of chairs lies in their disciplining ability to sustain an overall appearance of order. The conventions accompanying chairs guarantee not only that the host can be certain of his guests' timely departure but that until the ritual is complete, guest subjects will remain quietly in place. While attending a reception-hall wedding in Solo, I asked a seemingly bored young man seated next to me what his wedding might one day look like. "Just the same, it's up to my parents." "And how about *your* children, what would you do differently?" I continued. "Dunno." I tried again: "How about getting rid of the chairs?" The young man looked stunned: "Impossible, do that and there'd be a rebutan with men and women mixing together, out of control. You need rules." "But in the past there weren't any chairs at weddings," I protested. "Maybe, but that was then."

With the nearly ubiquitous appearance of chairs at Central Javanese

[38] A standard strategy for circumventing the usher's guidance is to recognize a friend near the front. This strategy is particularly effective at large affairs where guest couples stick together as is often the case in spite of older conventions that place men in one section, women in another. While the wife barrels ahead toward some long-lost acqaintance in the front, the husband trails along behind apologizing ceremoniously to all those in the process of being by-passed.

[39] For a description of the role of background gamelan music in reception-hall rituals, see John Pemberton, "Musical Politics in Central Java (or How Not to Listen to a Javanese Gamelan)," *Indonesia* 44 (1987): 16–29.

domestic events like weddings, several related demands are made on the attentions of the guests regularly filling the chairs. First, owing to the large number of weddings and other displays of "tradition" requiring attendance, sheer repetition has transformed these once relatively relaxed, almost informal gatherings (which is not to say that previous practices were somehow without form) into scenes of cultural endurance. Second, in light of just this repetitiousness, new attempts are made to recapture the attention of guests. The most significant addition to tradisional representations at New Order weddings is the mellifluous microphoned voice of a backstage master narrator. Hidden from view, the person who delivers the play-by-play ceremonial commentary couched in theatrical imagery, literary poetics, and intonation of a skilled shadow puppeteer is known, quite aptly, as the *protokol* although the Javanese neologism *pranatacara* (from tatacara) has recently taken root. Introduced early in the New Order, the voice of this protokol is now pervasive in Central Java, narrating events from the most lavish of urban weddings to the simplest of village affairs. When an oxcart loaded with stacked metal chairs, several loudspeakers, and a battery-powered transistorized amplifier slowly passes by on a rural dirt road where electric lines have yet to reach, everybody knows that someone must have ritual work to perform.

For the duration of the event, the protokol's narrative envelops guests with a linguistic vision so embellished that it seems to create, almost miraculously, the ritual scene it describes. Such is the case during the *kirab*, a formal procession of the bridal couple and entourage after the temu proper. In the past, this procession served a multiple purpose, which took the bride and groom first to the back of the house where they expressed gratitude to neighbors and kin helping out, then out of the host's home for public recognition by the village, and, finally, to nearby haunts of tutelary spirits for otherworldly approval.[40] By the 1980s, however, the kirab had become a show of tradisional fashion as the bridal entourage moved in courtly procession out of the host's home or reception hall, made a fast costume change into reception attire, and then immediately reentered the wedding scene in heroic procession.

The "Poetic Portrayal" of this procession (as the protokol's narrative description of the kirab is dubbed) typically opens as follows in this selection from a widely circulated handbook for protokol:

[40] The customary visit paid spirits often involved quite a trek. In many villages the kirab was performed on horseback.

> Herewith is told of the bridal procession, in grand escort the relatives and kin and the "eight-hundred" maidens all beautiful in kind. And who is the one acting as the bridal procession's esteemed commander-in-chief? Indeed, it is the most honorable Mr. _____. And why is it that Mr. _____ has been humbly beseeched to act as processional head? Indeed, it is to bestow blessings on the the bridal couple, safe and sound, secure, sustained, and free from misfortune, as the procession's esteemed commander-in-chief marches slowly, cautiously, in order, in precision, an incarnation of the accompanying musical meter each and every honored step ever examined on the right, examined on the left, a wonder to behold. One step the head pivots right, one step the head pivots left, as Lord Vishnu made manifest has come to attend and grace the bridal procession now in celebration this afternoon/evening.[41]

An alternative opener provided by the same handbook begins, for variation's sake, this way:

> May silence reign. Where, indeed, is there a hall whose magnificence is equaled by two in one hundred, ten in one thousand? Indeed, the _____ Hall as this poetic portrayal opens is the *one* hall decorated in the greatest splendor manifest in all manner of . . . .[42]

The unmistakably shadow-puppet theater (*wayang kulit*) style of these and similar poetic portrayal narrations intoned by protokol at weddings is remarkable in light of the fact that *wayang wong* performances—grandiose, quasi-operatic "human wayang" dramas that flourished in Central Java from the turn of the twentieth century on—are in sharp decline. Perhaps because many of the trappings and much of wayang wong's linguistic inflation have now been converted into ritual scenes of dramatic "tradition," wayang wong performances no longer seem necessary. Instead of "kingdom"—"Where indeed is there a *kingdom* whose magnificence is equaled by two in one hundred," begins the wayang play—now read, say, "Kusuma Sahid Prince Hotel." Yet the product of this conversion differs significantly from its source of inspiration and derivation. While wayang theater placed a constant stock of characters in

[41] Rama Panji Sosrohadi Kusuma, *Sekar Setaman (Bunga Rampai): Tatacara Adat Jawi Surakarta (Metu, Manten, Mati)* (Sala: Sri Rejeki, 1984), pp. 25–26. This narration, like many of those collected in *Sekar Setaman,* is taken from Java's prized protokol, R. Ng. Yasadipura.

[42] Sosrohadi Kusuma, *Sekar Setaman,* p. 39. These lines, freely translated here, are immediately recognizable to Javanese as the opening description of all wayang plays. In the wayang original, *hall* is rendered, of course, as *kingdom.*

an endless number of possible plays with each story presenting a distinct situational encounter, in reception-hall dramas, the story is always exactly the *same*. The difference between any two reception-hall scenes lies solely in the characters named, a difference facilitated by the handbook's inviting "Mr. _____." Characters thus emerge as interchangeable subjects of a uniformly splendiferous kingdom located in "_____ Hall."[43]

Relatively limited in terms of story told, the protokol's power of elocution, nevertheless, extends most conspicuously to reveal hidden points of interpretive sense (*raos, suraos,* and all the other High Javanese permutations of *rasa* as it hunts for secreted meaning). One such point invariably arises just after the bride and groom pass by in formal procession.

> The bridal couple move in grand procession indivisible, inseparable like Prince Arjuna and Princess Sumbadra striding ever so slowly each and every step, not hurriedly or impetuously following emotions. Now why is it that a wedding celebration is adorned with special offerings decorating the entrance of its ceremonial hall? All the various manners of special offerings possess philosophical senses [*raos falsafah*] blessed with beneficial blessings.[44]

Thus the protokol introduces his (or occasionally her) discursive turn to interpretive matters. What is the conventional meaning of the wedding offering's sugarcane or *tebu?* That "contains the interpretation 'an*tep*ing kal*bu*' [steadfastness of heart], indeed a blessing that steadfastness of heart accompany the bridal couple as they establish their household." From the *cengkir* coconut arises "ken*ceng* ing pi*kir* [with mind determined]," and so on, through a list of extrapolated meanings numbering nearly two dozen if a protokol is so inspired.

Twisted toward revelations more socially domesticating than fertilely endowed, such interpretations effectively uproot the productive shrubbery associated with Sri, reframe offerings as evidence of "Javanese tradition," and do so as if speaking *for* those who would attend to the underlying meaning of such a tradition. Older wedding guests sometimes find it unnerving that the possibilities of disclosing significance have been appropriated by this form of representation. Yet as protokol eloquently expose meaning, week in and week out, guests sit still, willy-nilly, occa-

[43] Just above its krobongan, Solo's Rose Hall features a "Welcome" sign—"Sugeng Rawuh," in Javanese script and transliteration—with a replaceable crest for the host family's name.

[44] Sosrohadi Kusuma, *Sekar Setaman,* pp. 26–27.

sionally nodding as if in agreement with the answers and amplified interpretation that steadily fills in the space of "tradition" with language styled always to make up for what may have been left out. The Soehartos' Mini wedding program, for example, put this interpretive spin on one of the most basic of offering ingredients, the *pisang raja* (a richly flavored banana, "the banana of kings," which villagers still tend to associate with fertility and, when joking gets serious, sex): "the couple will soon become heads of the family-neighborhood-nation."[45]

The sound of the protokol has become so familiar that without it, a truly "Javanese" wedding would seem unimaginable. This is particularly true for Javanese who have come of age during the protokol's professional ascent in the New Order. Bewildered by my suggestion that weddings might be more authentic without such protokol, one young Solonese man countered, "but without him, everyone'd become confused." Such an avoidance of confusion, particularly the disruption to "tradition" that certain practices associated with surplus and rebutan struggles might provoke, lies at the center of the wedding ritual's renaissance. Embodying the implications of a "Javanese" subject whose identity is imagined in terms of a rites of passage trajectory, bridal couples now kneel in elaborate acts of sungkeman, quasi-poignant gestures of subjection before authority. Hosts now assume, in turn, a new visibility at the apex of a ritualized chain of command: the ideal vision of authority at work. And all the while, guests remain seated, semi-detached from the increasingly familiar scene of order surrounding them, subdued by the tradisional incantations of an omniscient protokol.

Unlike other practices (certain village annual practices concerned, say, with tutelary spirits or ascetic pursuits) tradisional weddings present the ethnographer with a ritual scene so utterly predictable, so dramatically flat, that it might escape close analytic scrutiny. In the mid-1970s and 1980s when I was all too often obliged to attend weddings—sometimes as a friend of the family, other times as foreign guest/ethnographer, frequently as photographer—I increasingly felt that these events were like tuning in nightly to the same televised rerun of "Dynasty." Be that as it may, the "Javanese wedding" has represented *the* focal point of ritual analysis in Central Java for indigenous and foreign commentators alike, a site of explicit (again, following Asad) symbolic interpretation and representation. But what is one to make of this form of representation as it is routinely *repeated* from week to week? Could it be that the real force of symbolic interpretation lies less in the underlying meaning it would

[45] *Upacara Pernikahan,* p. 37.

reveal—for example, the yoke rite "means" cooperation—than in the repetitive sense it would convey? For in practice, the strikingly habitual nature of "Javanese" weddings threatens to undermine the integrity of ritual as an essentially self-reflexive site of symbolic production, and, thus, stimulates ever deeper interpretation as if finally anchoring repetition and avoiding the relatively endless implications of such a threat. It is precisely this form of repetition that underscores, in the name of upacara tradisional, the appearance of cultural order and authority so essential to sustaining the subject of "Java."

The frequency with which New Order Javanese feel obliged to attend tradisional domestic events is, as noted earlier, most remarkable and facilitated by Central Java's dense population and extended kin networks and, of course, by the renaissance of "tradition" itself. On some weekends, ritual double-headers are the norm: one wedding in the afternoon and then another later on in the evening. Moreover, a host of other domestic events—including male and female circumcisions, grandchildren "herding," anniversary rites, and even the exorcistic ruwatan ceremony, to name a few—are largely patterned now on the wedding temu's reception-hall ambience of tradisional order. This is true of the simplest of village affairs produced at home (though usually equipped with chairs, protokol, rented costumes, and other reception-hall-like paraphernalia) and relatively deluxe urban affairs. The domestic ritual most obviously derivative of the wedding temu is the *undhuh*, the groom's return home one week after the wedding with his bride and full bridal entourage in formal procession. By the early 1980s, undhuh were beginning to repeat practices previously reserved solely for the temu. At a 1982 undhuh in Solo hosting six hundred guests (reckoned "simple but adequate" by Solonese standards), even the egg-crushing routine was repeated. Although guests whom I questioned acknowledged that this was a recent addition—one might suppose, after all, that this act could only happen once—they appeared unconcerned, thoroughly accustomed to the redundancy demanded by filling in "tradition."

The replication of such scenes, thus, moves along two thoroughly related lines. On the one hand, tradisional order replicates itself in an ever-expanding catalog of explicitly ritual displays ranging from domestic scenes such as weddings and circumcisions to community and institutional observances to nationwide, colossal performances such as the Festival of Democracy. One night during the election campaigns when I asked someone what all the festivities were about in Solo's Batari Reception Hall, he replied matter-of-factly, "Just ritual 'work' [duwé gawé], a government campaign rally." On the other hand, this catalog of replica-

tion is itself replicated down the lines of state bureaucracy from provincial centers to subdistricts to neighborhood and village household "units" as it reaches further into the affairs of everyday life.

Perhaps the most telling example of both the extent and control of this reach is the widely acknowledged sukses of the government's nationally promoted birth control program, a program that emphasizes the implantation of the *spiral,* an IUD coil. Before the New Order, such implantation would have been unthinkable not only because of technologies of birth control and Sukarno's promotion of third-world identity through population growth but because the machinery of state operation simply could not reach *so* intimately into Javanese lives. Now, however, capitalizing on the scene of tradisional order that weddings present, local administrators routinely extol the virtues of becoming bona fide IUD acceptors (*akseptor*). If bridal couples pledge to become acceptors, they may receive Birth Control trophies and certificates of loyalty at the end of the wedding. And, when representative IUD acceptor couples are summoned, as they regularly are, by the Soehartos to the presidential palace for awards presentations, they invariably appear in tradisional costume. Once assembled, the couples receive Birth Control batik clothing—on the front of the man's gift-shirt is a large batiked reproduction of an IUD coil—and a wall plaque for their home along with New Order moral-upgrading reading material, a photo of their handshake with President and Mrs. Soeharto, and a free visit to "Beautiful Indonesia"-in-Miniature.

Replication and Its Discontents

As the process of Mini-ization reaches further into Central Javanese village affairs and tradisional scenes are replicated as evidence of a "Javanese" renaissance, particular contradictions between practices associated with Sri and the demands of "tradition" occasionally surface, if only for a moment. During such moments, the wedding ritual itself, centerpiece of "Java"'s renaissance, becomes a site for acknowledging the very traces of difference that such a renaissance would deny. When, for example, the tiny hamlet of Elephant Mountain (Gunung Gajah) located in the subdistrict of Bayat's arid foothills abutting Java's south coast mountains, began its negotiations for the 1982 wedding of a village bride to her fiancé from Solo, it did so with a heightened sense of precisely this sort of difference. The groom was from Solo's neighborhood of Kemlayan, a

neighborhood that had produced generations of palace servants for the Kraton Surakarta and thus, with the renaissance, was particularly confident of its grasp on tradisional demands. Elephant Mountain, however, was about as far from a recognized cultural center as one could get, and knew it.

The negotiations assumed the form of a *lamaran,* a formal proposal made on a groom's behalf to the family of the prospective bride. Arriving late owing to numerous misguided directions en route, the Solonese group recalled at length stories on the perils of getting lost in rural travels. "Once I took a bus heading in precisely the opposite direction of my destination, good grief was I confused," began one long-winded account. Such celebrated confusion simply attested to Elephant Mountain's marginal status. "This is the stiiicks (*plooosok*)," whispered one Solonese man as the groom's entourage (with which I traveled) first approached the bride's home. The Elephant Mountain representative responded, in turn, with an account of his village's somewhat eccentric history.

Once upon a time, there was a prince who sought the hand of a beautiful princess living far across the waters. The princess' parents consented to the match on the condition that the groom bring a shipload of gold as the bride price (*mas kawin,* literally, "wedding gold"). With such a load, however, the ship inevitably sank as did the requisite ceremonial wedding-elephant and so too the poor prince. The drowned elephant fossilized into Elephant Mountain, and the gold was transformed into the numerous boulders now scattered around the village. Quaint as it was, such a story did not bode well for marriage negotiations. As if unshaken, the Solonese representative at once replied in glorious High Javanese and presented the groom's formal proposal.

The Elephant Mountain spokesman politely acknowledged the proposal with language truly refined, even by Solonese standards, and then broke into a rapid-fire speech, studded with Low Javanese, concerning wedding practices. He noted that he had no idea what a proposal might mean to Solonese—that was their business—but in Elephant Mountain it was quite clear. (The groom's entourage sensed failure.) For nearly an hour the village spokesman, a dhukun in his sixties, held his Solonese guests in suspense as he meticulously produced an esoteric calculus of divinational reckoning. Adding, subtracting, and multiplying birth dates and other relevant data, he came up with a number which, if divided by four (as required by the Solonese abbreviated system of divination), would indicate connubial incompatibilty. The groom's group now was visibly distressed. But in a last-minute turnabout the dhukun suddenly

divided the total by nine and proclaimed, "A match!" "Of course there would be certain requirements" (*syarat*), he added.[46]

A new fear arose for Kemlayan. What did Elephant Mountain want, a shipload of gold? This fear was not unfounded because village families receiving city fiancés often expect relatively substantial contributions of money, regardless of the groom's actual resources. This Solonese groom's family had, in fact, little to offer. The dhukun then recited a long list of requirements: a small speckled chicken, one kilogram of raw rice, an old-fashioned water jug, an armful of firewood carried by the groom himself, and so on, through a maze of customary specifics all of which had little cash value. When finished, he declared: "Now that's the way it's done in Elephant Mountain!" Stunned yet relieved, the Solonese promised to meet these needs, sealed the proposal, and departed for home.

The groom's representatives knew that Elephant Mountain was in an ideal position to take advantage of its prospective city cousins. What transpired, however, was an intense lesson on the practice of wedding, Elephant Mountain-style. Part of the motive behind this lesson was an attempt to seal a lasting alliance between the two parties. The very specificity of the requirements—of practices recognized in *this* village—facilitated the possibility that the bridal couple would eventually settle in Elephant Mountain, thus providing a promising link (particularly regarding batik trade) with the city of Solo. The attempt also represented something of a strategic double play because this bond (along with offspring and the rest) was exactly what such an offering was meant, through magical practice, to bring about. Any modifications would, in Elephant Mountain, bring failure.

But there was more to the lesson than the chance of success through this particular wedding bond as the village dhukun later pointed out to me. Irritated by the common assertion that village customs are intrinsically backward, misguided, or simply incomplete—an assertion made both by New Order officials trying to impress upon villagers the need for consciousness (kesadaran) raising and by city folk as reception-hall "tradition" extends into village life—the dhukun responded this way: "We [Elephant Mountain villagers] don't have money, but we have our own practices, which are quite complex. They cost us a lot, always helping out here and there. If we abandoned our practices, we could build a deluxe house like that rich guy in the next village did. He's really

[46] The Solonese group later reckoned that "nine" must refer to the Javano-Islamic "Nine Saints" because a mausoleum in nearby Bayat was dedicated to such a character. My reading of this group's reactions during the lamaran was informed by the lengthy, somewhat perplexed conversation among the groom's representatives on our return trip to Solo.

Fig. 16. The 1982 bridal couple in the village of Gunung Gajah step into a water buffalo yoke, where a dhukun will bathe their feet with consecrated water.

wealthy. But we don't because we're not just animals scrounging for food."

A villager's cash outlay for domestic practices such as weddings, circumcisions, and so on, is most often relatively small although not inconsequential. The fifteen thousand rupiah spent for the 1982 Elephant Mountain wedding went primarily for renting bridal costumes and a public address system. Moreover, *communal* food resources are not significantly depleted by the very simple feast that accompanies weddings. The major loss suffered in the practice of "having [ritual] work to do" (duwé gawé) is the considerable labor involved in preparation, and yet this labor would be valuable, that is, convertible into the capital necessary to build a deluxe house, only if lucrative work were available. But work that might pay for such a house is scarce for the vast majority of Central Javanese villagers. The harshness of these circumstances, thus, is partially displaced by the apparent obligation to adhere to practices such as those informing an Elephant Mountain wedding.

As the difference between the few villagers who are wealthy and the rest who must scramble to put together a living becomes increasingly visible, the threat of appearing to "scrounge for food" is all the more tangible. This then may produce, as in Elephant Mountain, a renewed attachment to specific village practices, an attachment that from the outside often appears as evidence of tradisional diversity yet from within would *counter* the very framework through which such diversity is claimed. That is, the reassertion of difference that exceeds even the horizons of cultural variation counters precisely the New Order conditions within which "Beautiful Indonesia" emerged as a construct of desire. Villagers have witnessed firsthand the impact, often disastrous, of government development programs and have heard stories from family and friends who have migrated to cities in search of a living, only to return home with little to show. These travels yield similar high-contrast tales: of what Jakarta's luxurious Queen Plaza looks like, transmigration feels like, and official speeches sound like. Elephant Mountain's adherence to its own practices thus constitutes, in part, a rejection of this other, obsessively material world, as the village dhukun termed it, and reaffirms a particular response to an increasingly "inhuman" search for food.

Now one might say that adherence to these practices constitutes an understandably cultural response because village traditions are sustained. But to make such a claim would be to appeal to the generalized framework of "tradition" and structure of cultural diversity from whose power of recuperation Elephant Mountain would, through practice, escape. Indeed, it is within just this rhetoric of "tradition" and "diversity" that

Mini-ization itself moves to recuperate the subject of "Java" as a form of cultural variation. Moreover, to claim the 1982 Elephant Mountain proposal encounter as a form of, say, cultural resistance is equally problematic. Not only is the line between tenacious adherence to past practices in the face of "tradition" and valorization of New Order (along with anthropological) cultural diversity inherently difficult to secure, but certain scenes of tradisional renaissance in contemporary Java prove uncannily irresistible. When villagers crowd around the gates of a wealthy subdistrict head's house, trying to get a glimpse of the grandiose wedding spectacle within, there is undoubtedly a certain truth to the host's assertion that this scene is "authentically Javanese" (asli Jawa). Represented is a tradisional scene not unsimilar to that which reigned in the figure of "Java"'s royal, high-cultural past. Founded upon a desire to recover what may have been lost, to repeatedly fill in the incomplete, asli produces replicas of authenticity that operate as if the difference between colonial-era and New Order "Java" did not obtain.

The 1982 Elephant Mountain proposal recalled for a moment, however, that such replication has it own history, which normally bypasses the practical significance of speckled chickens and grooms loaded down with firewood, rather than gold. The enunciation of difference thus emerges here as that which might disrupt the very framework of tradition, diversity, even origins, difference otherwise would appear to serve. And this sort of momentary disruption exposes, in turn, a certain contradiction inherent in the construct of the culturally authentic—the asli—itself, a contradiction whose implications for tradisional wedding practices were brought home most succinctly for me by Java's most esteemed protokol, Radèn Ngabéhi Yasadipura. Born in Solo in 1919 and son of a high-ranking palace servant, Yasadipura did not pursue a career in business, as once planned, but enjoyed success instead as a radio announcer, owing to his polished High Javanese and winning voice. (This latter gift also brought him acclaim as lead singer in Solo's popular Hawaiian band, "The Moon Islanders.") After a long discussion of what must be done to ensure that a wedding is asli, Solo's prized protokol concluded with this reminder: "You know, in the old days there weren't any protokol, didn't need them. Their poetic portrayals started recently, around 1972. If weddings were asli, *really* asli, I'd be out of business."

6

Village Cleansing, Local Spirits

Traces of Difference

Recollections of the Central Javanese *désa,* or "village," of the preindependence past are more often than not filled with images of fertility. Rice stalks were greener and taller then, many Javanese recall, fruits fatter, food tastier, and village life as a whole somehow richer (*gurih*), in the term's full culinary sense. Given the pervasive poverty in rural Java of the late colonial period, such recollections are as much a comment on the current conditions of village life under the New Order as they are a quasi-nostalgic vision of a past when things must have been better. The implication is that things could not have been worse except, as villagers often point out, under the Japanese occupation when even rice and the crudest textiles became rare commodities. The difference between the past and present is further highlighted by the claim, common in Central Javanese villages in the 1980s, that in the past there was enough (*cukupan, just* enough) for most people, but now, although there are luxury goods (*barang lux*) around, few can afford them. "The one real product of the revolution," as one villager put it, echoing a widespread sentiment, "was public schools for the children. They hold our village's future." Yet even this sense of a future fades somewhat as the few graduates who are really successful do not always return home with their rewards, and many others either return empty-handed or, out of

embarrassment, do not return at all. One disenchanted young man who had left his village and moved to Solo in a futile search for work suggested to me that Lebaran—the annual holiday when millions of Indonesians return to their village homes at the end of the Muslim fasting month to beg forgiveness from family elders—should be renamed "National Jeering Day" (Hari Ngécé Nasional). He was sure to meet ridicule when he returned home, without work, for the holidays.

Village recollections are also filled with sounds that invariably slip, onomatopoetically, into stories of the past: *kothèkan* melodies arising from wooden troughs during rice hulling; *kenthongan* community signals sounded on bamboo tubes; *klongkangan* crooning and *macapat* recitations; the clatter of unidentified spirits passing by in the night; or the whispers of neighbors' gossip. These last two sounds are occasionally conflated. "Evil spirits?" mused one village woman, "Usually just the sound of your neighbors' tongues flapping." Although much of this is now overpowered by the urban noise of secondhand motorcycles and transistor radios, an aura of hidden richness, nevertheless, lingers in village Java whether rendered acoustically or otherwise, the sense of an incomprehensible complexity concealed just beneath surface clichés of pastoral simplicity and tranquility.

This sense of complexity at once attracts and threatens urban Javanese. Along with the pastoral images still associated with village life comes an unsettling world filled with spirits, black magic, quirky customs, and, for lack of a better term, the masses. Although glosses like the "people" (*rakyat*), "little people" (*wong cilik*), or simply "villagers" (*wong désa*) are recalled to keep the inhabitants of rural Java in place, behind such constructs looms the threat of their dissolution. Part of an urbanite's fear of becoming disoriented in rural travels lies precisely in the fantasized possibility of coming face-to-face with a crowd of villagers who might mistake him for a thief and, no questions asked, take action. On their trip back to Solo from the Elephant Mountain proposal, the Kemlayan group regaled one another with stories of some city soul lost in the countryside and either taken for a thief and attacked by villagers or disappeared completely by local spirits. The fear of becoming lost in rural Java thus involves much more than mere inconvenience, for entering this other "Java" implies the entry into a world ruled by its own specificity and attuned to possibly unknowable logics, a domain potentially so different, in fact, that it may lie beyond the recuperative power of well-centered rhetoric appealing to, say, local customs, regional styles, or even the idea of "village" itself.

From a village's perspective, as it were, there is a certain satisfaction in

all this. The Elephant Mountain spokesman's insistence on a speckled chicken derived from his commitment to a sense of specificity not typically rural (*kedésaan*), but acutely Elephant Mountain. Indeed, the very names of villages—Elephant Mountain, Growling, Silk Fishnet, Amazed Teaktree, Fidgety, Claw Scratch, or the ominous Dead Thief, to name a random few of the thousands of hamlets crowded into Central Java—are more often than not remnant signs of extraordinarily specific histories. As the autonomy of villages erodes under a New Order economic system that makes subsistence solely by indigenous agricultural resources less and less feasible and yet offers few openings in the form of village-based industry in return, village practices have assumed a new, albeit fragile, significance in the guise of what might appear from without as local customs. Through such practices, particular histories and identities are reasserted. Dead Thief, for example, has no need for speckled chickens.

As noted in Chapter 5, the harshness of economic conditions is partly displaced by a renewed obligation to stick to known practices when "having work to do" (duwé gawé), a conventional social imperative reinvested with meaning in light of an increasingly "inhuman" world. Villagewide practices in New Order Java transpose this reinvestment to the community level where what is at stake is not so much the sociocultural identity of particular households or heads of households but the identity of the village as a whole. It is as if by performing, for example, its own annual "village cleansing," or *bersih désa,* with all the requirements an event like this demands, Elephant Mountain or Dead Thief might somehow hold onto its peculiar specificity. That is, by an exaggeration of difference—of identification through its very otherness—a village would appear to exceed the limits of that which moves to contain it as typically rural.

Yet despite the relative remoteness of many Central Javanese villages, the possibility of exaggeration is not, of course, isolated from what I referred to earlier as the Mini-ization of Indonesia. Indeed, this exaggeration is only knowable as such precisely in light of the process of Mini-ization and is facilitated by two related yet distinct effects. First, local communities are remapped as essentially uniform replicas of a generic village. Although this remapping is, no doubt, part of a colonial bureaucratic legacy that determined the "Javanese village" as a well-bounded unit within subdistricts within districts,[1] within the New Or-

[1] See Jan Breman, *The Village on Java and the Early Colonial State* (Rotterdam: CASP, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 1980).

der's intensely *cultural* discourse, all villages are imagined to contain, willy-nilly, explicitly ritual events aimed toward the same general end: the preservation of a broader inheritance—of "Java." And with this assumption of an underlying "Javanese" identity comes a recuperated sign of difference, an appearance of "diversity" (keaneka-ragaman), the second effect of Mini-ization, with each village displaying its own model customary uniqueness (*keunikan*). As Central Javanese villages attempt to locate themselves on the extended "Beautiful Indonesia" cultural map—a map that makes "Java" its centerpiece, as Mini's Indonesian Museum so vividly demonstrates—it becomes increasingly problematic to distinguish the recalcitrant features of an older landscape of specifics from New Order "diversity." The exaggeration of difference itself, thus, becomes a celebrated feature of just the process it would counter. But might a realm of practice exist so thoroughly different, so unaccustomed to "diversity," that it exceeds even the expectations of difference?

Village Observances, Customary and Otherwise

Like news coverage of domestic customary events, news reports devoted to villagewide practices are at once bountiful and revealing. An account of a 1982 bersih désa "village cleansing" festival in Wiladeg, a village in south Central Java, headlined the following report with a title proclaiming that in this village the annual event "Receives a Festive Welcome."

> The traditional ritual [upacara tradisional] "Bersih Désa" or "Rasulan" [from *Rasul,* "the Prophet"] in Gunungkidul District began last Friday in the village of Wiladeg, Karangmojo Subdistrict, and ran for two days with an air of festivity.
>
> Approximately five thousand participants packed into the courtyard of Wiladeg Village Hall and overflowed into the streets surrounding the site of the ritual.
>
> This "people's celebration" [*"pesta rakyat"*] has become a tradition and is held once a year as a sign of thanks on the part of local residents to God for success [sukses] in all the endeavors made by the people.
>
> "If people work for a year and achieve success it's only fitting that they express thanks to God the Great Creator for all that success," responded several residents attending the ritual.
>
> The orientation of "Rasulan" has shifted in the era of development [*era pembangunan*]. While in the past the ritual was held after people

had gathered the rewards of the harvest, the ritual is now organized once people have been rewarded in private business and paid all their taxes, including property taxes.

According to beliefs [of Wiladeg residents], the "Bersih Désa" ritual is closely connected to a myth about the magical power of [the spirit] mBah Gembong [Grandfather Leader] who protects the village from wild animals and greediness.

This people's celebration was visited by the Regional Leaders Panel, Level II of the Gunungkidul District [district-level heads of administration, army, and police], the Karangmojo Subdistrict Regional Leaders Triumvirate [the three subdistrict chiefs of administration, army, and police], and local elders and was made festive by a gunungan [Javanese for offerings of rice and foodstuffs piled in "mountainous" mounds or cones one meter or so high] procession, performances of reyog, dance, theater, and wayang kulit, and sports activities.[2]

The "shift in orientation" of the bersih désa covered in this account reflects a broad set of shifts in village practices whereby "local customs" are inscribed within a centralized New Order culture system. In Wiladeg, harvest is replaced by "success" and the shade of the spirit Grandfather Leader by "God the Great Creator." In former times, however, it was a village's tutelary spirit(s) that provided a sense of well-being and gave the bersih désa its primary focus. Along with the shift to administrative concerns comes, almost naturally it would seem, the relocation of the bersih désa from the site of the village's tutelary spirit—an oddly endowed well, spring, or banyan tree—to the seat of sub-subdistrict administration, the village hall proper. The significance of this move is brought home in the account's final paragraph, which features the government officials—district and subdistrict heads of adminstration, army, and police—who grace the event with their presence. It is the presence of such authorities that turns the local community into a *host* village whose "traditional ritual" may thus receive a festive welcome.

A similar news report on 1982 bersih désa events in south Central Java focuses not on a specific village but on the Gunungkidul District as a whole.

The people of Gunungkidul District recently have held a traditional celebration [*pesta tradisional*] called "Rasul," which is performed every year after the harvest season. Although the Gunungkidul area at this time was overrun by drought owing to the dry season, nevertheless, the "Rasul" celebration ran festively in each village.

[2] *Kedaulatan Rakyat,* August 28, 1982.

. . . This celebration has existed for centuries and constitutes an inheritance from their ancestors. While there are certain people who want to abolish the "Rasul" celebration, this is not true for the majority of Gunungkidul people. On the contrary, most want rituals of a traditional nature [*upacara-upacara yang bersifat tradisional*] to be continued, without interruption, because all of this represents part of the culture of the Indonesian people.

According to explanations from local leaders in Gunungkidul, the "Rasul" celebration is an expression of the farmers' thanks to God for the bestowal of good fortune in the form of the various crops harvested. According to the belief of people in Gunungkidul, the "Rasul" celebration is also intended as a request to God that they always receive His protection and are spared misfortune. And also to this end, that their security [keamanan] not be disturbed. They refer to the "village guard" which, according to their beliefs, is another form of being considered to be the village's guardian spirit.

. . .

What is unique [unik] about the "Rasul" celebration is that each village in the area has its own designated day for holding the celebration. This day has been fixed for centuries. People do not dare change a celebration date determined in former times.

. . .

The preparation of various sorts of food in each resident's house at the time of the "Rasul" celebration symbolizes [*merupakan perlambang*] prosperity in the village.[3]

As in most news accounts of bersih dêsa, here the village guardian spirit is referred to only to become marginalized in deference to God, the central focus of thanks for a prosperity expressed in patently symbolic terms through preparation of ritual food despite widespread drought. Although such prosperity is still commonly glossed by the term *slamet* (as a sense of well-being), here the special resonance of slamet in New Order discourse is made quite explicit, a state of security (keamanan) with all its associations of policed security. To the twin ends of success and security, thus, are dedicated rituals of a "traditional nature," representations of a generalized "culture of the Indonesian people." As is also true of most news accounts of village customs, the report on Gunungkidul bersih dêsa recognizes a certain diversity in all this by identifying what must be unique to each village though here the recuperation of local specifics is so complete that the difference is matter-of-factly reduced to terms that are purely calendrical. It is as if by pointing out that if today is, say, Tuesday the 13th, the ritual observed must belong to Village X.

[3] *Suara Merdeka,* July 4, 1982.

Villagewide Central Javanese practices similar to those now valorized in news stories have received relatively little ethnographic attention in colonial or postcolonial times, for researchers have concentrated their ethnographic gaze primarily on domestic life-cycle rites in an effort to inscribe, perhaps, a "Javanese" subject that might then speak with cultural authority. Nevertheless, village practices abound both in kind and in number and disclose a complexity that, in many respects, far exceeds that of the more routinely celebrated domestic events. Among the many village events associated with the solar calendar (reckoned both by Javanese agrarian-based seasons and the so-called national, or Gregorian, calendar), the most pervasive are postharvest bersih désa village cleansing, on the one hand, and village-level Indonesian Independence Day celebrations (Tujuhbelasan, or August-the-Seventeenth), on the other. Postharvest bersih désa may occur immediately after the harvest in late spring or early summer or well after the harvest later in the summer as was the case with the events covered in the news reports just noted. Given the calendrical proximity of summer bersih désa and August-the-Seventeenth celebrations, as well as an overall shift in the focus of many bersih désa in the New Order, these two annual village events are increasingly celebrated as one.[4]

Village practices attuned to the Javano-Islamic lunar year are more varied and idiosyncratic. During the nights of the last week of the Moslem fasting month (Pasa), many villages hold night fairs in anticipation of Lebaran, the celebration that ends the month of fasting. Similar fairs are held for Muludan, events occuring during the month of Mulud in observance of Mohammed's birthday (with the Central Javanese palace Sekatèn celebrations providing the grandest Mulud displays). Still other events fall in the months of Rejeb (for the ascension of Mohammed) and Besar (for Ibrahim's sacrifice). If one were to imagine a spectrum of Javano-Islamic lunar year practices ranging from the most conventionally Islamic observances (such as Pasa-, Mulud-, and Besar-associated practices) to those with little if any explicit connection to Islam, at the far end of these latter would fall village events held in Sura, the first month of the Javano-Islamic year. Such events are primarily dedicated to reestablishing relationships with the spirit world, particularly the village's tutelary or guardian spirit (*dhanyang*), and, thus, like postharvest events are often perceived as bersih désa although the gloss *Suran* remains the general term.[5] Finally, during the month of Ruwah villagewide practices

[4] Bersih désa are also sometimes called *merdi désa* (to take care of the village) or *sedhekah bumi* (to give alms to the earth). Bersih désa events occurring late in the summer are sometimes called rasulan; this is especially true in south Central Java.

[5] Similar events occur in some villages during the months Sapar and Séla.

(*sadranan*) are performed when the graves of ancestors are cleaned and provided with offerings. Although sadranan practices usually require that families travel to other villages to visit burial sites of family ancestors, nevertheless, these practices frequently include local observances for the village guardian spirit and for legendary figures of magical power who, by historical accident, may be buried near one's own village. Like Suran rituals, village events held in Ruwah are also frequently perceived as forms of bersih désa.

While Pasa and the Lebaran celebration lie at one end of the Javano-Islamic calendrical spectrum of village observances and Suran bersih désa, at the other, observances associated with Ruwah float somewhere in between. And at the heart of village observances—whether associated with harvest time, Independence Day, Sura, Ruwah, or other calendrically reckoned auspicious moments—lies the bersih désa. This highly celebrated point of communal focus still widespread in Central Java presents a moment when guardian spirits are contacted by means that occasionally exceed the bounds of New Order cultural rule. For, like the modest methik harvest practice, bersih désa events often are motivated (or at least were, until New Order times) by the promise of a rebutan struggle over objects of power.

Consider, for example, the bersih désa of a village located in one of the more fertile rice-growing regions of Bayat Subdistrict several hours southwest of Solo. The 1983 event fell in March, immediately after the primary harvest was completed. As is true of other Central Javanese bersih désa held just after the harvest, the shadow-puppet wayang story performed in Bayat was drawn from the Sri tales, the same tales of reproduction introduced by the dhukun in Chapter 5. The performance of a Sri story, villagers noted, acknowledged the completion of the harvest and promised prosperity in the next agricultural season. Moreover, the wayang performance was considered both a sign of Sri and a performed offering for the guardian spirit who resides in this village's peculiar large spring. The bersih désa served a significantly doubled purpose meant to maintain agricultural reproduction *and* hospitable relations with the local spirit world.

In addition to contributing money for the wayang offering (for the cost of sponsoring a wayang performance), each village household also contributed a pair of *ambengan* (trays of prepared food), one tray containing cooked rice surrounded by discrete portions of accompaniments, the other various market snacks (*jajan pasar*). After nearly one hundred pairs of trays had been collected at the village headman's house, at 11:00 A.M. an equal number of men acting as household representatives convened for the slametan proper, that well-known Javanese practice (often

dubbed by ethnographers a "ritual feast") which focuses on the distribution of prepared food after a formal speech (*ujub*) and prayers devoted both to generalized well-being and the efficacious execution of the event at hand. Upon completion of the prayers, which in this case included lengthy invocations addressed to Sri and Bayat's guardian dhanyang, the food was then redivided. Roughly one hundred identical trays were composed—each containing a combination of rice, accompaniments, and market snacks—and handed out to all the men present. (The surplus food would be served later that night at the wayang performance and also be used for nonvillage guests attending the bersih désa.) After a few perfunctory nibbles at their slametan portions, the household representatives returned home with their respective trays.

Such was the formal slametan scene for Bayat's 1983 annual bersih désa, a scene of apparent communal feasting for the sake of slamet, which has become a classic in ethnographies focused on Central Java because similar acts of feasting appear as well at all life-cycle rituals. Indeed, this scene would seem to lie at the very center of matters "Javanese." Clifford Geertz, for example, begins chapter 1 of *Religion of Java* with the following: "At the center of the whole Javanese religious system lies a simple, formal, undramatic, almost furtive, little ritual: the *slametan*. . . . The *slametan* is the Javanese version of what is perhaps the world's most common religious ritual, the communal feast, and, as almost everywhere, it symbolizes the social and mystic unity of those participating in it."[6] Yet the slametan was not the only event attracting the attentions and energies of those involved in Bayat's bersih désa day.

Earlier in the morning before the slametan, many of the same men had congregated at the dhanyang's spring for an event far less formal than that at the headman's house. Unlike the slametan proper and the wayang performance, this was an event that did not appear on the village's official Bersih Désa mimeographed program. Nevertheless, well over a hundred men, women, and children showed up. Near the spring had been placed an offering consisting of the usual fare—a roast chicken, rice, fruits, and so on—and specialty items preferred by this village guardian spirit, one bottle of gin (*jenèwer*) and three cigars. A short speech made by the spring's caretaker offered the lot to the dhanyang. No prayers followed but instead a rebutan struggle erupted whose intensity was equaled only by its brevity. Almost instantaneously, all of the offerings disappeared into the hands of the crowd save the gin and cigars. These

[6] Geertz, *Religion of Java*, p. 11.

were left for the spring's caretaker, a dhukun who would use these items sometime in the future. Conversations with villagers after the day's events revealed little sense of a contradiction between the acutely orderly atmosphere of the slametan at the headman's house and the rebutan scene of struggle at the site of the guardian spirit.

This apparent compatibility is striking in light of the considerable analytic emphasis given slametan as an expression of cultural order in ethnographies on Java. Geertz's reflections on the significance of slametan—reflections that I noted much earlier in the Introduction—deserve attention once more: "The *slametan* represents a reassertion and reinforcement of the general cultural order and its power to hold back the forces of disorder. . . . In a subdued dramatic form, it states the values that animate traditional Javanese peasant culture: the mutual adjustment of interdependent wills, the self-restraint of emotional expression, and the careful regulation of outward behavior."[7] As a fundamental reinforcer of "cultural order," that is, an expression of adjusted interdependent wills, restrained emotions, and so on, the slametan would seem to sum up all that a rebutan struggle is not. But what if slametan events—particularly those associated with bersih désa—were not enframed, essentially, in this form of orderliness and were approached instead from the more precarious vantage of rebutan rivalry and contestation?

To the limited extent that a slametan may be characterized as a communal feast, it represents a feast that is truly, as Geertz notes, furtive. Feasting at a slametan usually involves little more than a few quiet bites before departing with a packet of one's remaining portion, for the slametan's focus is the *distribution* of exchanged food. Rather than a form of commensal bonding, slametan are, in practice, more of a ritual take-out.[8] What, thus, attracts Javanese villagers to slametan is not so much the possibility of feasting together but the promise of returning home with a designated portion of empowered slametan food: *berkat.* This slametan reward is the product of an exchange that collects pairs of trays from village households, redivides the food collected, and then redistributes some, but not all, of the food in individual trays or packets. Such an exchange necessarily yields a surplus, food that is served later, withheld for nonvillage guests, or, as in some villages, specifically designated for local villagers of "insufficient means" (*ora mampu*). As a pro-

[7] Ibid., p. 29.

[8] This is particularly true of bersih désa and other villagewide events where one would expect communal acts to be most exaggerated. In domestic rituals such as weddings, however, the New Order reception-hall ethos places increasing significance on acts of eating together.

cess for producing surplus, the bersih désa slametan performs as a sign of abundance and works by the same productive logic as methik harvest practices that braid rice stalks, withheld from the harvest, into figures of Sri. Moreover, within the context of a bersih désa, the slametan's production of surplus is similarly juxtaposed to the powers of dissemination inherent in acts of rebutan by means of a struggle at the site of the village dhanyang. And it is precisely this juxtaposition that activates Sri—prosperity—and renders the relationship between slametan and rebutan events not only compatible but necessary. The rebutan supplements what would otherwise remain an isolated, somewhat repressed scene of furtive bonding in the form of a classic slametan, and rescues slametan practices from their potentially enframed status as a model of slamet—a state of security in which "nothing happens"—by implicating them in a broader, intensely active, process of production.

There nevertheless is a certain tension between acts of rebutan and scenes of slametan. While the former present moments of pronounced rivalry in which rewards are disseminated through a process by nature inequitable yet filled with possibility, the latter represent an orderly distribution governed by a dedication to uniformity made painstakingly apparent. Occasionally the pull toward rebutan interrupts even the slametan proper, and the slametan itself gives way, almost uncontrollably, just as prayers are completed and villagers surge forward to get a handful of the slametan food. "Last week I was out in Pedan to do a bersih désa wayang," recalled a puppeteer in 1983, "and they had prepared this really good-looking slametan—two kinds of roast chicken, and everything. No sooner had the modin [the local Islamic official] finished with the prayers, than all the men lunged at the rice offering and chickens, tearing them up and tossing pieces to friends standing on the sidelines. Imagine, there was this official still sitting with hands poised for praying and a chicken thigh comes flying through the air. He was good-natured enough about it though—seemed used to that sort of thing."[9]

Most often, however, an air of formality prevails at slametan events, rebutan are restricted to sites empowered by dhanyang, and the conventional tension between the two regenerates a logic of production whereby neither is, ideally, threatened by the other, a logic through which both are mutually activated. But this tension *itself* is intrinsically threatening to New Order constructs of cultural orderliness and would appear to ex-

[9] This account is from the late Ki Sutrisna. Ki Naryacarita, another dhalang performing on the bersih désa circuit, reported similar incidents.

ceed the limits of recognizable diversity. Through suppression, the attraction of rebutan (that is, the desire to rebut) has thus gained a kind of quiet intensity in New Order times as the productive tension between slametan and rebutan has become exaggerated within an official discourse that associates the former with culture and the latter with politics. Before returning to more explicit scenes of contestation where this exaggeration is so pronounced that rebutan are, in effect, placed under conspicuous cultural erasure, I turn now to a pair of bersih désa where the shift in orientation alluded to earlier in New Order news reports has produced highly representative expressions of "success," "security," and, above all, "tradition."

An Exchange in Practice, a New Order Moral

The reach of this shift in orientation is striking in contemporary rural Java. A village in the Pracimantoro Subdistrict located in a remote arid region along Central Java's south coast, held its 1982 bersih désa, for example, in late June although in the past May had been chosen for this postharvest event. Because of the 1982 general election, the moment was deferred. But this was not the first alteration of customary practices the village had experienced. Before New Order times, Pracimantoro's bersih désa had provided an occasion for a much-celebrated, relatively raucous tayuban: a promiscuous social dance in which village men, one by one, join provocative professional female dancers. The site for the tayuban was a gnarled tree, haunt of this village's dhanyang, who took great pleasure in such spectacles. The tayuban, along with heavy drinking and frequent rebutan stuggles among men competing for the favors of hired dancers, presented, in practice, a highly potent offering to the dhanyang. After the massacres that brought the New Order to power in 1965–66, however, Pracimantoro's annual tayuban events were discontinued at the command of newly installed subdistrict authorities.[10] By 1982, the tayuban scene had been replaced by an orderly male choir (*gérongan*), which, after three brief unaccompanied choruses of a gamelan musical classic—"Wilujeng" (High Javanese for *slamet*)—quietly dispersed. Reconfiguring the dhanyang's needs in the name of "tradi-

[10] Many tayuban in this area disappeared after 1965–66. A number of bersih désa disappeared altogether here (as elsewhere, in the districts of Wonogiri, Boyolali, Klaten, and Sragen) during these years, many of which were later revived in altered format. Although some villagers recall an official command to restrain from organizing community-based events, it is likely that many of the bersih désa suddenly vanished as a result of fear.

tion" and for the sake of security—again, slamet—the possibilities of rebutan struggles were ceremoniously circumvented.

In other Central Javanese villages, however, tayuban continue although stripped of the pleasure of contestation and gussied up instead in the costume of an officially sanctioned "traditional performing art" (*seni tradisional*). Covering 1983 bersih dêsa events in the Manjungan Subdistrict—events featuring artful tayuban performances—the Javanese weekly *Djaka Lodang* concluded its thoroughly sober report with the following appeal to cultural preservation:

> Of customary rituals like this there are still many that we encounter, performed by the people spread throughout the Indonesian Archipelago with the aim of requesting blessings from God the Almighty so that tranquility, slamet, and prosperity will be bestowed. At least such are the customary rituals, inherited from the ancestors, that it is our duty to continue and preserve. By continuing to preserve them we show respect to the ancestors. In addition, this inheritance from the ancestors is entered into the arts and culture of the Nation, adding to the Nation's cultural treasury's wealth, that is, to the Indonesian Nation's Culture that possesses the spirit of [the state ideology] Pancasila.[11]

Pracimantoro's *tayuban*-less village cleansing was further altered by a small but significant modification, new in 1982, which intially puzzled some villagers. As in the past, each household contributed food trays carried to the village headman's house for the slametan's prayers, exchange, and distribution. But after prayers were completed, the trays of food were then immediately returned; no exchange was made. Each household thus received exactly the *same* food it had contributed. The headman, mastermind of this modification, later spoke in elevated New Order terms that wedded "tradition" with "progress" (kemajuan). Inspired by recent election campaign rhetoric, he stressed the importance of the *indiwidu* (individual) as if it were the ultimate subject of bureaucratic efficiency: a sub-subunit to be cautiously filled in with social awareness (kesadaran). "You only get back what you put in. Very traditional, all part of cooperation [*gotong-royong*]," he concluded.

The headman then pointed out new tall poles in the approach to the village—installed just in time for the government party's 1982 election benefit—that would, it was promised, someday support electric lines. "I

[11] *Djaka Lodang*, October 8, 1983, pp. 13, 48. This bersih dêsa (referred to as Longkangan, a synonym for the month of Séla) was supplemented with a *bersih laut* (cleansing of the sea) event for local fishermen and sailors.

know that there are people who say those poles will just stand there empty, but first you need the pole, then come the lines that connect them. That is where our tradition of cooperation comes in." Speaking in formal Javanese language laced with appropriate Indonesian terms, the village leader produced this conclusion by means of a poetic conflation: *tiang,* Indonesian for *pole,* converged, quite convincingly, with *tiyang,* High Javanese for *person.* Representing free-standing electric poles lined up for the future, New Order individuals were urged to recover tradisional connections. Just one year later, by the time of Pracimantoro's 1983 bersih dêsa festivities, the modern lines of identity contained in studiously unexchanged slametan food trays were themselves claimed by villagers to constitute, in fact, just such a custom.[12]

A somewhat similar shift in bersih dêsa orientation—that is, a shift whereby "tradition" emerges as a sign of contestation's absence, of cooperation, and does so by reinvesting the subject of "Java" with an individualized sense of social awareness—was particularly evident at the 1983 village cleansing of Benda, a village set in fertile rice plains lying just south of its district center, the city of Klaten. Unlike most other Central Javanese bersih dêsa, since 1971, this event was prepared primarily for children. At 3:00 P.M. two dozen little guests (all less than ten years old, most less than six) were summoned to the slametan by a loudspeaker booming with children's pop music (*pop anak*). Rattan mats had been spread out in a village elder's front yard and the children arrived with a sort of happy deliberateness, bearing customary food trays from their respective households while moms and dads observed from the sidelines. After one of the adults recited a dedication speech—to God, success, security, Indonesia—and offered prayers, the slametan food was redivided and the children handed over a five rupiah coin each as a token compulsory contribution (*uang wajib*) and received in exchange their portions of the food, or berkat. By 3:30 the event was over.

[12] The villagers' initial concerns over the delayed arrival of electric lines—in 1984, the village was still without electricity—and the change in slametan procedures were partly offset in the 1982 bersih dêsa by a night fair featuring gambling. All through the night and well into the next day, Javanese card and dice games and local lotteries were packed with villagers in search of immediate rewards. At the time, I viewed the gambling as a rebutan replacement, an indirect form of resistance to New Order ritual domestication. I later discovered that the gambling had been organized here as elsewhere by the Wonogiri District police, who profited from bribes and substantial percentages of the winnings. The highlight attraction was a cockfight. Unlike the celebrated Balinese cockfight, which is usually over in seconds, this cockfight produced an excruciatingly long drama since the two Javanese birds were not armed with razor spurs. After nearly one hour of sporadic pecking until little life was left on either side, the winner emerged with half its beak missing.

Later that night a wayang shadow-puppet performance was held. Given the nature of the afternoon's slametan—essentially a kindergarten scene of socialization into the world of "Javanese" customs—the choice of story performed was remarkable, drawn as it was from the Bharatayuda repertoire, stories depicting the apocalyptic war between the Mahabharata's Pandhawas and Kurawas, a war between relatives who, on both sides, meet varied although consistently gory fates. The choice of such a story for Benda's bersih désa had an equally remarkable history, a history not uncommon in the Klaten area.

In the early twentieth century, Benda's bersih désa flourished as a postharvest event featuring a Sri tale in shadow-puppet performance.[13] After a poor harvest sometime in the 1920s, however, a Dutch official from the nearby sugar factory suggested that a Bharatayuda wayang performance, along with all the grand offerings required by such a performance, might ward off crop failures in the future. "The Dutch loved offerings, slametan, and wayang performances," recalled one of Benda's older residents. "They often held enormous customary [adat] ceremonies in their sugar factory."

Armed with the Bharatayuda and funded by local landowning rice farmers, the village's bersih désa continued. But as the sugar industry gradually depleted village resources, it became increasingly difficult for the rice farmers to sponsor such events. For purposes of economy, bersih désa celebrations often doubled up with Javano-Islamic lunar-year events (such as Suran, Muludan, and Ruwahan) as they coincided, now and then, with solar-year harvest times. After a series of bad harvests in the 1970s (owing, among other things, to *wèrèng* insect infestation of New Order high-yield variety rice strains), it appeared that harvest reality (*kenyataan*) no longer depended on offerings. The focus of the bersih désa shifted yet again.

The event was completely divorced from harvest concerns and permanently linked with the lunar year's month of Ruwah: the time when the graves of ancestors are cleaned and, along with the site of the village dhanyang and other local figures of power, provided with offerings. This timing has remained fixed since 1978.[14] Despite this bersih désa's shift of

[13] The dhalang who performed for Benda's 1983 bersih désa was the late Ki Sutrisna. The history that follows here is taken largely from the accounts of Benda villagers and supplemented by conversations with Sutrisna recalling stories from his father, Ki Tiksnasudarsa, who frequently performed in Benda both in colonial and postcolonial times.

[14] In many, perhaps most Central Javanese villages where the bersih désa is not held as a postharvest event but instead associated with the lunar calendar, Ruwah (with its sadranan rites at the graves of ancestors) is the norm. Although Ruwah-based bersih désa are relatively recent in some villages (as in Benda), Ruwah bersih désa appear to have occurred since at least the turn of the twentieth century.

emphasis away from postharvest concerns, Benda's elders maintain that the Bharatayuda performance continues to be an essential component of the event. The Bharatayuda story is *not,* they stress, performed for the sake of a fertile harvest but instead on behalf of the dhanyang and ancestors as an exemplary lesson (piwulang). The moral? "Conflict [konflik], especially among brothers, is bad." This is the lesson they want to implant (*nanem*) in the next generation.

The history of wayang performance at Benda's village cleansing thus discloses a general shift in the status of bersih désa shadow-puppet theater from offering to lesson. Once proffered as an sign of productive harvests, Sri stories presented an active means to prosperity. The switch to Bharatayuda stories in the 1920s after failure in the fields constituted, in turn, an inflation of offerings, for the Bharatayuda performance itself required substantial additional offerings devoted to avoiding accidents and other misfortunes conventionally associated with these stories. (When, for example, the grandfather of the puppeteer who performed for Benda's 1983 bersih désa staged a Bharatayuda in the nearby village of Jomber during a 1930s bersih désa, a villager attempting to remove a branch obstructing the wayang screen inadvertently chopped off his own leg instead.[15]) If a Bharatayuda was held without incident, the village was thought to have manifested its general state of slamet as well as a certain strength. Although negatively formulated as the demonstration of misfortune avoided, bersih désa Bharatayuda performances nevertheless still served primarily as offerings, and grand offerings at that.

The dangers associated with Bharatayuda performance assumed a new significance, however, following the catastrophic events of 1965–66, for Benda was situated in the middle of regional slaughter that, as Central Javanese recall, pitted "brother against brother." Since the early 1970s, the Bharatayuda has no longer been performed as an offering but rather as a demonstration of dangers suppressed. As one Benda man put it, "We can sponsor a Bharatayuda wayang without incident. Slamet!" With harvest associations now past, the Bharatayuda story has thus been converted into an exemplary lesson—"Conflict, especially among brothers, is bad"—and agrarian concerns themselves have become transposed into

[15] The history of the use of Bharatayuda for bersih désa in Jomber resembles that of Benda. Until Ki Sutrisna's grandfather's time, "Sri Mulih" was performed. When the Bharatayuda story depicting the death of Durna was performed, the wayang was customarily interrupted by villagers who, at the moment of Durna's death, tore the puppet to pieces. Ki Sutrisna added that an inexpensive or tattered Durna puppet was brought along for this. Bharatayuda performances have been known to cause the entire platform supporting the wayang screen, dhalang, and gamelan to cave in. A follow-up ruwatan wayang performance must be held to preclude further disaster.

a moralistic key: a lesson implanted in youth. Arising from the haunting memories of the mid-1960s, this lesson is, however, increasingly separated from the events of those years and recast in the extremely guarded terms of New Order appeals to maintain security, at all costs—terms in which struggle of *any* sort suggests disaster. The bersih dêsa in Benda thus places side by side two examples for the next generation to follow: a slametan for children not yet accustomed to tradisional practices and a lesson designed to cultivate customary avoidance of New Order security's opposite, conflict. But what, then, is the fate of rebutan?

Promising Encounters

Of the many practices associated with Central Javanese villages, one event has a certain priority over all others because it occurs only once in a village's history, the *papar tunggak* (leveled stumps) whereby a village is first founded.[16] When a tiny hamlet in the Klaten District was officially instituted as a village in 1983, recalled were practices similar to those of a half-century earlier in the 1930s when such events were, for demographic reasons alone, far more common.[17] Central to the papar tunggak is an offering reflecting the environs (*lingkungan*) in the form of various fruits—coconuts, bananas, kluwih—and a shadow-puppet wayang story performed (much in the manner of bersih dêsa Sri stories) as an indispensible component of the offering rather than as a performance per se, "Babad Wanamarta," the Mahabharatan story of Bima's clearing (*mbabad*) of the forest that would become the Kingdom of Ngamarta. The choice of this story for founding a village involves more than simple thematic continuity, for at the very moment in the shadow drama when the wayang figure of Bima begins his heroic, Paul Bunyanesque act of clearing, the guardian spirit's food-offering placed near the wayang screen is suddenly assaulted and *rebut*-ed by villagers. Not content to limit their rebutan to the offering proper, villagers head off into the bushy surroundings in search of other rewards, clearing as they go. At a village's inception, thus,

[16] Aside from annual village events marked by the solar and lunar calendars or by a village's founding, in rural Java sporadic, less-frequent events occur, including, for example, exorcising practices occasioned by crop failure and epidemic illness. Although *ruwatan bumi* rites for crop failure are still evident in Central Java (particularly in villages on Mt. Lawu), the arak-arakan processions that once circumambulated a village plagued with illness and misfortune seem to have disappeared in the late 1940s.

[17] This account is from the late Ki Sutrisna, the dhalang who performed for the 1983 event.

is the rebutan, an act of struggle and dissemination that exceeds the formal boundaries represented by wayang performance and spills out into the area that will become the village. That is, the wayang performance is itself *rebut*-ed as it is interrupted; in the process, a dhanyang is satisfied and a new village is founded.

Although the papar tunggak is rare in contemporary rural Java, New Order government housing projects (Perumnas) on the outskirts of Central Javanese cities, nevertheless, sometimes sponsor modified versions of the event. Such was the case for the housing-project community of Palur erected just east of Solo. In August 1983, a papar tunggak was organized by local administrators who felt that although the project was already in place and the houses inhabited, a clearing ritual was in order, a tradisional display entertained by a wayang performance of the "Wanamarta" story. Despite the puppeteer's suggestion that such an event called for a rebutan, local officials spread the word that nothing of the sort would occur.[18] The wayang was interrupted instead by a lengthy speech from the subdistrict head—a speech emphasizing security (keamanan), cooperativeness (kegotong-royongan), and the avoidance of conflict (konflik). The same official later avoided my questions concerning the deleted rebutan with this blunt one-liner: "It's no longer relevant!" Scenes of rebutan struggles are, indeed, about as contrary to portraits of "Beautiful Indonesia" as anything one could imagine in New Order times.

Yet grand acts of rebutan do occasionally appear in contemporary Java, particularly at sites considered magically endowed with power(s) emanating from legendary figures whose spiritual weight has created an inertia so great that even the forces of Mini-ization seem diminished by comparison. In Jatinom, for example, a subdistrict center in Klaten, a formidable rebutan occurs annually at the site of Ki Ageng Gribig's tomb.[19] Gribig was a character of ascetic bent who, it is said, made a miraculously fast round-trip pilgrimage to Mecca half a millenium ago and returned with magically charged souvenirs in the form of *apem*, small, round rice-flour pancakes. Once a year (on the fifteenth of the month Sapar) thousands of Central Javanese villagers converge at

[18] Ki Sutrisna, the dhalang who performed at the 1983 rural papar tunggak, happened to live in the Palur housing project. In anticipation of Palur's clearing ceremony he had informed both local officials and neighbors of the rebutan custom. Although his neighbors seemed really keen on the idea, he noted, the officials did not.

[19] This annual event is called "Yakowiyu," deriving, Javanese say, from *Ya qowiyyu*, Arabic for *strength*. Gribig is claimed to have been a student of the prophet Sunan Kalijaga and Ya qowiyyu an essential part of Javano-Islamic teachings.

Gribig's tomb in anticipation of getting a share of his empowered booty. Immediately following slametan prayers, crowds press forward in an effort to retrieve these power pancakes as they are hurled from the roof of the mausoleum. In 1982, no less than two tons of apem were, as villagers put it, *rebut*-ed. Taken as amulets, the pancakes are not meant to be eaten, but are locked away or, as some Jatinom farmers would have it, planted in fields to increase fertility.

The scene is remarkable in light of the army security forces that stand between the crowd and the mausoluem as if to prevent an all-out rebutan aimed at the mausoleum itself, that is, as a reminder that the attractive force of rebutan possibly knows no limits. There is, thus, an eerie stand-off in this scene between the forces of rebutan and the security forces, between the possibility of patently politicized acts, the transgression of New Order security lines, and the possibility of cultural recuperation, a time when security forces would no longer be necessary, a time when the event either no longer seems appropriate or has been sufficiently domesticated through enframement as, say, a "rebutan ritual." Although such an enframement of rebutan is unlikely, it should be noted that Gribig embodies just the sort of figure of power that attracts Central Javanese (New Order subjects and rulers alike) and that the alleged spirituality of this attraction makes the event's continuation permissible in the eyes of government officials through a rationale of guarded enthusiasm. When rebutan acts are not tied directly to spiritual figures like Gribig but are associated instead with a somewhat more contagious sense of village autonomy (as unmodified papar tunggak and bersih dêsa events appear to promise), New Order officials become far less enthusiastic about rebutan's implications—security forces or no security forces—as the following case from a village in north Central Java discloses.

Once a year, the village of Tulakan in the Jepara District holds an unusually large bersih dêsa celebration, whose size, no doubt, is the result of the event's feature attraction: a parade of huge, mobile mountainous offerings (gunungan, similar to those paraded at Kraton Sekatèn festivities) constructed from rice and sundry food stuffs, topped with decorative feathers, and called, simply, *jembul*—"plumes." Strutting provocatively around town and attracting large crowds of spectators, these jembul have drawn much attention from Department of Tourism officials dedicated to promoting local color. "Perhaps the ritual could begin a little later in the afternoon," officials reckoned, "so that tourists from out of town might witness it from the beginning."[20] With its colorful Jembul

[20] *Suara Merdeka,* September 26, 1982.

ritual, the village of Tulakan would seem to have achieved "Beautiful Indonesia" recognition, but not without a cost: the suppression of rebutan, which until the late 1970s were as fierce as the jembul themselves were attractive. A 1982 news report covering the event offers this insight:

> Several years ago, according to several sources, this traditional ritual raised controversial [*kontroversial*] issues. For example, the presence of Jembul which are *rebut*-ed by visitors who receive, they say, magical blessings if they are successful in getting a part of the Jembul figures. But from the perspective of those carrying the Jembul the point is to defend them and keep them intact. It is precisely this moment that attracts the attention of visitors. The climax comes with this incident [peristiwa]. But as it turns out, this incident no longer occurs, so that the climax is almost entirely absent even though this is just what the visitors are waiting for.
>
> But . . . everything must continue to run as a bersih dêsa event which has become a tradition.[21]

What remains of the annual jembul encounter is, again, the somewhat eerie juxtaposition of a well-ordered formal procession on the one hand, and the deferred pleasure of rebutan on the other hand, an act of ritualized waiting buoyed by an air of intense expectation. The news report notes further that the "air of disorder" (*suasana kacau*) that once surrounded the Jembul now rarely occurs: "What occurs instead is only a parade formation. Thus the onlookers do not really let their emotions explode."[22] What makes this modified Jembul procession especially appealing to government officials, thus, is not simply the parade spectacle itself but the spectacle of a rebutan successfully suppressed, a desired incident ritually overcome in the name of "tradition."

As the news reporter cannot help but observe, however, such an incident is precisely what villagers seem to be waiting for, rather like the crowds along the streets during election campaigning. During the 1982 campaigns when a government party papier-mâché sugar factory float emblematizing Development began to dissolve into the street because of sudden torrential rains, only then did crowds of spectators cheer and begin to move en masse, gumrubyug. As I noted in my introductory comments on campaign movements during Indonesia's Festival of Democracy, such momentary displays of ekses are, however, completely necessary for successing New Order elections. It is thus somewhat odd,

[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.

perhaps, that rebutan events have yet to be recuperated as "traditional" scenes of, say, ritual inversion where spectators might admire them from a distance and exclaim, with a New Order sense of cultural security, "Ah, the rebutan ritual!" For this is exactly what has happened to a Central Javanese practice related to rebutan in its power to attract crowds who then begin to move on their own, the so-called hobbyhorse trance dance (*kuda lumping*) now routinely trotted out for bank dedication ceremonies and similarly auspicious occasions.

This apparent lack of recuperability on the part of rebutan has a necessarily opaque history of implications concerning "Java." As suggested earlier, researchers have concentrated their ethnographic gaze primarily on domestic life-cycle rites and, thus, have tended to overlook just those domains of village practices where incidents of rebutan are likely to appear. This rather systematic displacement of rebutan is supplemented by the fact that rebutan acts themselves have never been framed, in Javanese, as *upacara rebutan,* "rebutan rituals." From the late colonial period on, just as the discursive framework that would endow the figure of "Java" with an explicitly "traditional" identity was emerging, acts of rebutan were increasingly marginalized—either banned outright or quietly abandoned because of their apparent threat to security for the sake of slamet. Lying always just beyond the formal limits of recognizable "Javanese" culture, rebutan struggles appear more as occasional events, as incidents, than as established custom. In doing so, they facilitate the constant reinscription of the very boundary of culture—customarily rendered through the slametan ritual—that would exclude them.

Rebutan thus might be construed as the negative structural opposite of slametan, a sort of necessary excess similar to that within the ekses / sukses distinction by which Festival of Democracy elections are instituted and secured. But to do so would reaffirm the kind of binary distinction (of order versus disorder, and so on) that has been questioned from the outset. For the point is *not* that there was once a culture (precolonial or otherwise) in which rebutan and slametan performed as cosmological polar opposites but that slametan became enframed within "Javanese" cultural discourse in a way that appeared to imply a negative counterpart: that which must be avoided. Hence, simply to valorize rebutan as if reinstating the other side of "Javanese" culture—or even as if identifying an underlying form of what some would call cultural resistance—would be misleading, because such an analytic move necessarily invokes just the disciplinary apparatus of culture that provides the figure of "Java" its discursive power.

For this reason, I have deliberately avoided defining the term *rebutan*

as "a set of ritual practices that . . . etcetera, etcetera," for, in practice, rebutan struggles appear as exceptions to ritual protocol, moments of interruption when crowds suddenly descend on objects of power: droppings left by an albino water buffalo, the remnants of a Javano-Islamic saint's pilgrimage, offerings to Sri or a guardian spirit, or jembul constructions of abundance. To rebut is to *ngalap berkah*, to "swoop down on and capture" (ngalap), just as a hawk swoops down and seizes the object of its intense gaze, "blessings" (berkah).[23] But even when approached in this manner as exceptions, moments of rebutan still imply, it would seem, a certain cultural rule to be proven. Could it be that only by their *abandonment*—by the avoidance of acts now deemed, in retrospect, kontroversial and laden with konflik—rebutan struggles might escape enframement and thereby reassert their force in terms of a promised moment, a moment when something might *not* "not happen"? In this case, rebutan would be recalled not as fundamentally cultural events, as "traditions" to be continued or discontinued, but as historical moments when something remarkably disruptive to cultural assumptions once occurred and did so with a force that makes it conceivable that something similar might occur once more.

This haunting potential of rebutan as a sign of almost limitless contestation is readily apparent if one recalls how thoroughly embedded the term *rebutan* itself is in colonial and postcolonial political discourse. Consider the 1971 thoughts of the Kraton Surakarta's Prince Jatikusomo, a retired Central Javanese general in the Indonesian army and one of the few members of the Kraton royal family to make a successful transition from colonial Surakarta palace politics to postcolonial rule:

> Besides aspiring to "order and concord, welfare and well-being, respect and deference" [a quotation-marked reference to conventional Javanese language formulations of statecraft, *tata tentrem, karta raharja, kajèn lan kéringan*], politics [politik] has as its primary goal, however, power. Because according to political thinking, without power you cannot pur-

[23] An additional standard usage of *alap* refers to "bride capture," an act that motivates many popular wayang tales. Javanese usually distinguish *berkah* (generalized blessings won) from *berkat* which, as noted, pertains to food carried home from a slametan. The Malay-Arabic source for both terms, however, is *berkat*, and the two are sometimes used interchangeably. This possible linkage strengthens the preceding argument in two ways. To the extent that the two terms coincide in usage, the rebutan's *berkah* and the slametan's *berkat* both point toward one end, the dissemination of blessings. To the extent that Javanese maintain a distinction between the two in spite of the terms' tendency to merge, two modes of dissemination are articulated: one works by struggle and captures rewards, the other by the orderly distribution of rewards in identical take-out packages.

> sue these aspirations. Thus politics, crudely put, in reality is the rebutan of power, and if it is not the rebutan of power it is the defense of power.[24]

The crucial word in this passage is *crudely,* for having already referred extensively to German, Dutch, and English language definitions of politics, the general brings his thoughts home for his Javanese readers by invoking the most charged image of contestation he can recall from his vast political lexicon, the image of *rebutan.*

Controversial issues, conflict, disorder, and so on, all of these are associated with the term *rebutan* within the guarded language of New Order politics. Since the late 1960s, the implicit threat of rebutan disruptions has been countered by constant reference to "order and concord, welfare and being, respect and deference," and all the other formulations of political stability couched in patently cultural terms. These are terms that would place rebutan outside the realm of possibility because such acts appear to undermine a distinction most essential to New Order rule: that between culture (kebudayaan) and politics (politik). It is only by imagining the terms of this distinction as fundamentally separate, that political events like Indonesian general elections can *then* appeal to "cultural" values in the form of a Festival of Democracy, values that underwrite an ostensibly stable inheritance handed down from time immemorial. As a "colossal ritual," the 1982 election would necessarily achieve sukses, and masters of ceremonial order such as General Sudomo would be relieved of the possibility of really confronting the "crowd," as he put it, that made his hair turn white.

The promise of rebutan remains hidden, however, within just those practices—village cleansing, leveled stumps, harvest methik, and so on—that would confirm a village's position on the "Beautiful Indonesia" cultural map. Positioned thus, rebutan imply a moment when, again, something might not "not happen" according to custom. Indeed, precisely because of their suppression, rebutan now reassert this promise both as a sign of possible excess—of that which must be avoided for the sake of slamet—*and* as an indication of customary practice that might exceed the limits of custom itself. "But as it turns out, this incident no longer occurs, so that the climax is almost entirely absent *even though* this is just what the visitors are waiting for." As long rebutan are ritually

[24] G. P. H. Djatikusumo, *Sedjarah Politik Hingkang Sinuhun Kandjeng Susuhunan Pakubuwono VI* (Surakarta: Panityo Kol-Dalem PB VI, 1971), p. 5.

repressed owing to their political connotations, then the force of rebutan—what one might even call, in an effort to rescue anthropological frames of reference, their ritual efficacy—assumes a certain exaggerated significance. For the potential force of ritual in New Order "Java" may very well derive from the possibility of ritual *denial,* of that which, through absence, redoubles expectations.

Ghosts of the Past

If rebutan events appear just beyond New Order and conventional ethnographic visions of cultural order and define the outer limits of such order through their implicit contrariness—not culture, not quite—they do so, nevertheless, as an alterity hidden *within* recuperations of other as diversity, another other, as it were, whose exaggerated response to enframement, although denied, silently threatens the process of enframement itself. This threat perhaps motivates much of the ritual work now performed in the name of "Java." But the promise of rebutan, whether denied or not, is not the only horizon of "Java" that periodically appears to need securing, for rebutan themselves recall yet another force potentially disruptive to New Order cultural frames, a force that every bersih désa must find terms for, if not come to terms with.

In spite of its urban setting well within the city limits of Solo, the neighborhood of Bibis Kalang holds a bersih désa annually, in the month of Sura, the *only* bersih désa remaining in the city.[25] In 1983, this event fell on October 20 and yet resembled, in many respects, the postharvest bersih désa described earlier for the village Bayat: a gathering at the site of the dhanyang spirit in the morning; a formal slametan at the neighborhood center later; and an all night wayang shadow-puppet performance. By 7:00 A.M., about thirty men had convened at the dhanyang's site, a large, central well from whose inner walls a tamarind tree had somehow managed to sprout and rise straight up and out, most ominously, as if flagging the well's position. After incense was burned and flower petals

[25] The official name of this neighborhood is Bibis Kulon (West Bibis). Although *bibis kalang* might translate as "hovering water beetle," inhabitants of this neighborhood maintain that *bibis* means "lots of water" and *kalang* derives from the name of a Central Javanese forest people skilled in woodworking. Bibis inhabitants do not, however, claim ties to the kalang people. That the annual Suran event in Bibis is actually perceived as a bersih désa is immediately evident from the official mimeographed program issued by the Bersih Désa Committee of Bibis.

scattered about, one man was lowered deep into the well on a makeshift rope of braided bicycle innertubing. Each year this honor is bestowed on someone new.[26] While the man bounced around inside the well, scrubbing its interior walls and patching cracks, others worked at the top, cleaning and repairing with great care. After about one hour of work, the whole lot—the well along with the trunk of the strange tamarind tree growing inside it—was freshly whitewashed. At this point, one man turned to me and commented: "This is a real bersih dêsa. Everyone's cleaning up their houses and yards too. It's just like Independence Day, only Independence Day *doesn't* have the well."

By 9:00 A.M., mats had been spread in the courtyard near the well for what appeared to be a slametan although it was referred to here simply as an invited event (*kondangan*).[27] Soon thereafter, platters of food arrived: a boiled chicken, whole; a large basket of cooked rice with accompaniments; and bananas. Engulfed by great clouds of burning incense, a prayer sought the dhanyang's blessings for the neighborhood and all its inhabitants and the "Country of Indonesia." At the end, all the men screamed "Amin!" and then, laughing, grabbed flat teak leaves soon to be filled with food. Distribution of the food began slowly with the rice evenly divided into little mounds scooped onto each outstretched teak leaf. But when the boiled chicken was held up for division, men suddenly pressed forward and took over, ripping the chicken apart, grabbing bits of it for themselves and throwing remaining parts of the carcass to eager hands in the back.

The evening scene was, on the whole, more predictable as slametan go, with each household donating a pair of food trays: one with variously fashioned mounds of rice, the other with roast chicken and condiments, all collected at the headman's house. The slametan was preceded, however, by a procession (*arak-arakan*) for which the Bibis bersih dêsa is well known. At 4:00 P.M., several elders dressed in formal attire arrived at the well with handfuls of wayang shadow puppets that would be used in a performance later that night, including Bathara Guru, ruler supreme of the wayang world's pantheon of gods. In the midst of more clouds of

[26] Cleaning a well in this fashion is called *nguras*. The idea is that the dirtier the water gets in the process, the more drenched in blessings is the man within the well. In the past, a number of men would descend, one at a time, taking turns at scrubbing the well's inner walls. In the village of Sambiroto (Pracimantoro Subdistrict), unmarried teenagers annually climb down into the village's enormous well and stir up the water until it becomes filthy with mud. If this is not done, they say, the following year's harvest will be poor.

[27] In many areas in Central Java, especially rural areas, *kondangan* and *kendhurèn* are used as synonyms for *slametan*.

Fig. 17. Shadow puppets bow to the spirit in the well of Bibis Kalang, during the neighborhood's 1983 *bersih désa.*

incense, these shadow-puppet figures also sought the dhanyang's blessings, bowing their heads in obeisance to the well. The puppets then took their place at the head of the procession now assembling in the courtyard.[28]

Beginning at the well, the procession circumambulated the entire neighborhood, clockwise, moving through alleyways and across major city streets. The moment the procession emerged from the courtyard, torrential rains fell. "Showered with blessings, as usual," quipped one woman, amused although seemingly sincere. The rains did, in fact, come out of the blue in the twilight of this evening in mid-October.[29] Trailing behind the puppets was a costume parade mostly of children and teenagers dressed as wayang characters, revolutionary heroes, hobbyhorse trance dancers, and all the other characters that now customarily appear

[28] The procession was also referred to as a *kirab wayang.* In this context, the kirab (display) of wayang puppets was meant to protect, through circumambulation, an inscribed inner area from outside threats.

[29] The woman's comment, nevertheless, made meteorological sense because the lunar month of Sura had, in fact, coincided with the rainy season for the past fifteen years. October now fell just at the beginning of this season.

at Independence Day parades in Central Java. Until the mid-1960s, the procession had featured professional trance-dance troupes and similar attractions competing for the spectators' attentions. Although the wayang shadow-puppets were protected with umbrellas, all the other paraders were drenched, yet everyone seemed satisfied.

At 7:00 P.M., a formal slametan was held at the neighborhood center. "This is for our neighborhood and the dhanyang," one man informed me. "And for the nation, too," added another. "But of course," replied the first, and then they both grinned. This sense of peculiar pleasure taken in highlighting Bibis over the nation emerged frequently in Bibis. Although the dhanyang's blessings stretched to include not only the neighborhood but the "Nation of Indonesia" as well, the rebutan at the well earlier in the morning brought home the fact that this was a markedly specific event devoted less to the sort of national security normally acknowledged in New Order slametan than to the concerns of Bibis itself. Even Bathara Guru had to bow to the dhanyang of Bibis before making his trek around the neighborhood. In most Solonese quarters, local spirits receive, at best, a handful of flower petals on Thursday nights, and neighborhood celebrations such as those for Independence Day are motivated primarily by routine competition for the city's "Best Neighborhood" prize. To the extent that the nation concerned the bersih désa of Bibis at all, it was as if the former somehow depended on the latter, and not vice versa.

At a follow-up meeting of the Bibis Bersih Désa Committee a week later, finances were the central topic. Bibis took great pride in its open accounting of the contributions and costs of the event, an accounting designed to demonstrate absence of corruption. Before the bersih désa, donations were collected from those families who felt they could afford it. In 1983, more than three-quarters of Bibis households responded with donations, which, when added to outside contributions from friends and family in Jakarta (accounting for 10 percent of the total collected), yielded a sum (750,000 rupiah) double that collected for local Independence Day celebrations. The fact that the many popular puppeteers who performed for the bersih désa of Bibis did so at substantially reduced rates provided additional evidence for this urban event's singular power; a puppeteer's popularity increases dramatically, they say, owing to certain magical forces associated with the event. Although a few critics thought neighborhood funds might be better spent, this was never made public nor was it the dominant opinion. The general sentiment lay elsewhere. The persistence of the bersih désa of Bibis derived, it seemed, from the well and the peculiar tamarind tree sprouting from within.

Stories about the well and its dhanyang circulate widely in Bibis. The guardian spirit is one mBah Mèyèk, an old woman whose name reveals that she is hunched over under the weight of an invisible heavy load (*mèyèk-mèyèk*), a name that for simplicity might be rendered "Grandma Burdened."[30] A stream of strange events has occurred in the area around the well, they say, since the time of Pakubuwana IV, a phrase meant to conjure up more the feeling of a weighty history than the actual dates of this Surakarta king's rule (1788–1820). One of the men who had scrubbed down the well on the morning of the bersih dèsa later summed up the history more or less as follows:

> During colonial times not much was out here: fields, a small village, the well, and several huge tamarind trees which stood out much more than those around here do now. The Mangkunagaran Palace had a racetrack nearby. Sometimes the racehorse would vanish into thin air along with its rider. My father was village head in the 1930s. He had a horse too. For an entire week that horse didn't move. It turned out that Grandma Burdened, the dhanyang, had borrowed it to meet the [spirit] "Sultan" of Mt. Lawu. They had relations of some sort. The racetrack later was converted into a landing strip for small planes. Pilots who didn't know about the well would fly too close and crash. During the revolution, people living here were safe though. A lot of people used the water from the well for medicinal cures—still do. In 1939, when my brother was deathly ill, my father encountered an old woman at the well who gave him money for a bundle of rose petals for an offering. When he realized that the amount she'd given him was way too much—enough for ten baskets—he looked up, but the old woman was gone. A neighbor told him it must have been Grandma Burdened. He bought the flowers, placed them at the well, and my brother recovered.
>
> Once, a Dutch plane crashed very near the well and damaged the tamarind tree there. At that time people saw an enormous snake leaving the well, with little snakes the size of your thumb riding on its back. I guess the little ones were too small to make it alone. They were moving to the large tamarind tree on the other side of the road. That snake is really a companion of Grandma Burdened called Grandad Hadji [mBah Haji], but that's just because of his clothing. He doesn't know a thing about Arabic; he was here long before the Arabs came. In 1949, the area

[30] Dhanyang most often reside in water sources (wells, springs, pools, rivers) or certain trees (banyan, tamarind) or sometimes, as in this case, both. In the south Central Javanese village of Kotawarogo, the dhanyang takes the form of a white eel that provides village women their sexual appetites. Although dhanyang are customarily distinguished from *babadra* or *cikal-bakal* (the village founder), occasionally this distinction collapses and the dhanyang's site is a grave.

was leveled for a Dutch landing strip used for the war. The tamarind tree near the well was cut down and the well itself covered over with concrete. Later, the Dutch surrendered, of course. Maybe Grandma Burdened should be made a National Hero.

In 1950, the well was reopened and a small tamarind tree sprouted and grew inside the well, on its inner wall. That's when we started holding the bersih désa again like we used to before the war. I still remember some fool in the early 1950s that was bringing a truckload of chairs in for a wedding here. He parked too close to the well. When he'd finished unloading the chairs, the truck wouldn't start and he went crazy. But we made an offering there and everything was okay. The area still claims victims, especially the stream that feeds the well. In the dry season when there's only a foot or two of water, you'll find the corpse of someone who's drowned. That happened after we omitted the wayang performance at the bersih désa. Small businesses around here went bankrupt that year too.

From time to time people spot an old woman near the well, just for a second or two, then she vanishes. The same goes for the snake in the tamarind tree and strange civet cats—all with a certain fragrance. You just get glimpses of them, then you blink and they're gone—we don't know where. People say they're omens [*wirasat*]. Of course you don't kill them, probably couldn't catch them anyway.

As *wirasat,* or omens, Grandma Burdened and her cohorts generally work toward the avoidance of disaster in the neighborhood. Bibis inhabitants tell of accidents preceded by the fleeting appearance of the dhanyang.[31] Whether these accidents turn out for the better or worse depends largely on the person involved rather than Grandma Burdened herself. If someone reads the significance of the dhanyang's appearance correctly, and in time, the would-be accident may be avoided altogether. Because Grandma Burdened performs as a sign of danger, she herself is considered dangerous although *not* danger's cause. For the dhanyang is a figure of presentiment, a manifestation of strategic insight exteriorized and projected as an ominous sighting. Both despite and because of all appearances, Grandma Burdened is perceived primarily as a source of protection.

[31] Clifford Geertz records a similar situation in East Java. "Like any good *dhan[y]ang* . . . he still guards his village. Every so often he emerges from his grave, taking the form of a pure white tiger, in order to warn the village of an impending epidemic, flood, or other disaster. At these times, one may glimpse him just for a moment, digging like a cat with his front paws at the crossroads. He never attacks anyone, for his purpose is to warn the inhabitants of the approaching trouble; as soon as he is certain he has been seen, he disappears" (*The Religion of Java,* p. 28).

Proper relations with her must, of course, be maintained if misfortune is to be avoided and the spirit's sometimes quirky wrath averted. Parking a truck in Grandma Burdened's domain was not a wise move. To the extent that a dhanyang protects people from its own menacing anger, the offerings paid to the spirit represent little more than protection money. But because dhanyang also protect people from outside dangers—or, at the very least, give them due warning—these spirits differ significantly from the everyday spooks known to haunt Central Javanese and demand offerings in return. Indeed, Grandma Burdened even sometimes provides the money for her own offering if someone in the neighborhood is seriously ill. And it was through her that Bibis was spared disaster during the war. Despite their periodic crankiness and occasional unpredictibility, dhanyang, thus, are generally recognized for the protection they afford. Unlike conventional spooks, these are grounded characters, privileged "guardians of the land" as *baureksa* (a synonym for *dhanyang*) would have it. And only dhanyang are referred to with the extremely familiar kinship term *mbah*, "grandparent."

Ethnographers of Javanese spirit beliefs have tended to lump dhanyang together with all the other spirits, a terrifying assortment of essentially negative beings that haunt the landscape. Consolidated thus, dhanyang (along with the other spirits) appear as that against which culture takes shape. Clifford Geertz, for example, concludes:

> Despite the confusions, contradictions, and discontinuities of [peasant] spirit beliefs, they present also a wider and more general meaning than the isolated explanations of unhealing wounds, psychological fugues, and improbable bad luck might lead one to expect. They depict the triumph of culture over nature, human and nonhuman. As Javanese culture advances and the heavy tropical forest turns into rice fields and house lands, the spirits retreat to the remaining woods, the volcano cones, and the Indian Ocean.[32]

The persistent presence of spirits such as Grandma Burdened suggests, however, that these guardians of the land are precisely the means by which the well-being of a neighborhood or village—even the nation—may be sustained. (What gives the remark that Grandma Burdened should be made a National Hero its peculiar curve is the fact that unlike usual national heroes, this character is still around.) The retreat of these spirits, thus, does not so much guarantee the triumph of culture as it indicates a state of affairs about which many Central Javanese are pro-

[32] Ibid.

foundly ambivalent. The fading of the spirit world in Solo is commonly cited, for example, as evidence of a difference between then and now, a now not necessarily better than what preceded it. Why are there fewer spirits in Solo nowadays? "Because now the city is overcrowded, too noisy," was the answer that frequently introduced recollections of a time less overridden with motorcyclists and other products of urban congestion. Spirits are not denied as a logical possibility but matter-of-factly remembered as they made one final appearance before leaving the city's human inhabitants behind. "The last time I heard it was around 1978. One night there was a 'tek tek tek tek tek' clatter in the backyard and that was it—never came back," recalled one Solonese man of a spirit in the neighborhood of Baluwarti.[33] Although some Solonese maintain that the city is a safer place owing to fewer spirits—less haunted, they say, than rural areas—many miss the sense of protection that dhanyang once offered. This is particularly true of neighborhoods plagued by crime, traffic accidents, and other manifestations of misfortune. "Spirits still exist," an elderly Solonese woman pointed out, "it's just that a lot of them have moved away from here. Maybe not such a bad idea."

There is a another sense, however, in which the spirits' retreat may represent the triumph, as it were, of culture, a sense increasingly tangible in New Order times. As shifts in bersih dêsa and other practices steadily marginalize dhanyang and their attendant rebutan, translating slamet into states of formal security and symbolic success, they do so by offering up the whole business to a national treasury of inherited cultural wealth. Redirected toward "tradition," offerings are now typically drained of discrete specificity that once required, say, three cigars and a bottle of gin—no more, no less—be placed at the site of a dhanyang. The unending requirements of "tradition" appropriate and replace such offerings with overarching demands; indeed, offerings are now often prepared expressly *on behalf of* "tradition" itself. And, because these offerings are aimed toward relatively vacuous, generalized ends rather than directed at necessary specifics, Central Javanese appear increasingly unsure about what is really required, that is, whether an offering is really complete. This sense of incompleteness produces (much in the manner of Padmasusastra's celebrated *Tatacara*), then, an

[33] Solo still is thought to have a formidable supply of spirits in all imaginable shapes and sizes. While the Kraton Surakarta alone accounts for a goodly number of such beings, Thursday night offerings are still evident at familiar haunts throughout the city. Nevertheless, these offerings appeared to me to have dwindled between 1975 and 1984, and the younger generation seemed less preoccupied with such matters.

almost limitless *lavishness* of offerings in an effort to recover what may have been forgotten in the process of recalling "tradition." Which is to say, by virtue of the contradictions of its own creation, "tradition" itself has emerged as a meta-spook endowed with an insatiable cultural appetite.

Under such conditions Grandma Burdened's ghostly lingering is extraordinary indeed. For the urban bersih désa of Bibis partially reappropriates "tradition," turns it upside down as if graciously extending the dhanyang's protection to include the entire nation, and thereby reclaims this potentially generic annual ritual as an intensely Bibis affair. Why is this the case? One could, perhaps, look to sociological indicators for clues—the result of a large number of long-term residents, or conversely, the impact of many newcomers wishing to assert neighborhood identity—although there is nothing particularly unusual about the composition of Bibis that would, I think, prove helpful. Nor does official religious affiliation, for example, or administrative structure distinguish this neighborhood from many others in the city. Instead, the answer is unnervingly, almost unacceptably, simple—Grandma Burdened, a figure who in her very *specificity* transgresses the boundaries of generalized cultural constructions of difference.

Responses from other dhanyang similarly not yet accustomed to the beautification of "Java" and the singular logic of representation implicit in New Order formulations of diversity are equally specific. The dhanyang associated with the village of Gambiran, I was told, "still insists on ten nights of Bharatayuda wayang shadow-puppet performances—very old-fashioned!" The dhanyang of Pancoran on the other hand, continues his aversion to wayang but longs for the tayuban he once enjoyed. And then again, in Kirobayan, a village near Central Java's south coast, the dhanyang has taken it upon himself to prohibit bersih désa observances altogether. On the eve of the village's 1983 bersih désa, the cranky old spirit came to the village headman in a dream and made one final customary demand: "I will not be 'ritual'-ized!" (*di"upacara"kaké*). This was the dhanyang's last communication, and from then on, this annual event has *not* happened and instead has been left suspended in a sort of ritual limbo. Thus, the refusal to be located on "Beautiful Indonesia"'s extending map is articulated finally through a silence, an absence that itself serves as a continued reminder of the village spirit's power, a reminder accompanied by a sense of waiting.

As noted earlier concerning certain expectations raised by rebutan's suppression, the potential force of ritual in New Order times perhaps can only, or best, be manifested through moments of denial. These are

moments of displacement when "Beautiful Indonesia"'s framework of cultural security is either ritually *unobserved*—as in the case of the spirit who annually absents himself—or ritually bypassed as in rebutan struggles. But when one speaks of ritual in this way, one is referring to not simply an expression of culture but culture's implicit displacement into politics. Or better yet, one is speaking across a New Order (and anthropological) culture / politics distinction that, to some rebutan followers and unpredictable spirits, still appears, for one moment at least, perfectly unthinkable. Although trangressions of this distinction suggest moments of resistance, even, perhaps, local empowerment, resistance of this sort appears extraordinarily transient, ephemeral. Founded on an absence that would somehow lie beyond the constraints of such a distinction, how long can a spirit's *lack* of communication be heard or a suppressed rebutan's attraction felt? For it is just these apparent blanks or absences in the cultural landscape, these nagging reminders of incompleteness, that motivate the process by which "tradition" itself is recovered.

7

The New Order's Other "Java"

Sacred Sitings, Otherworldly Communications

Unlike the increasingly marginalized practices associated with village dhanyang, practices concerned with propitiating other sorts of spirits now flourish under New Order rule. Many Central Javanese regularly perform vigils at sites considered spiritually endowed and, therefore, sacred—*kramat*—in hopes of receiving various forms of boons and blessings. The motives behind these vigils, generally known as *malem Jum'atan,* or "Friday-Eve practices" (Thursday night is a particularly auspicious moment for pilgrimages to such sites), differ in two fundamental respects from those tied to dhanyang. First, visits to kramat sites are highly personal affairs reflecting individual desires rather than community interests. Second, Central Javanese most often travel to sites *outside* their own neighborhoods or villages, for the source of supernatural blessings customarily lies elsewhere, far from everyday life. While dhanyang are extremely local figures whose acknowledgment implicitly threatens the New Order's generic village culture (unless bersih désa are refashioned in recognizable "Beautiful Indonesia" terms), pilgrimages elsewhere do not carry the local implications that bersih désa, by definition, present. Nevertheless, the question of personal motivation remains: if New Order Javanese are so concerned with the security of slamet, then

why do they make frequent excursions into the highly uncertain terrain of this other spirit world?

Topographies of Power

There are two great geological foci of magical power and supernatural forces in south Central Java: Mt. Lawu, situated forty kilometers due east of Solo, and the south coast area of Parangtritis facing the Indian Ocean immediately south of Yogyakarta. The latter opens out into the oceanic realm of the Queen of the South (Ratu Kidul), the powerful spirit-queen who, as noted in earlier chapters, performed as spiritual consort and protectress of Central Javanese kings. The former is reckoned the site of the ascetic vanishing (muksa) of Majapahit's last king, Brawijaya V, and the realm of the spirit-king Sunan Lawu. Both are endowed with caves, grottos, springs, pools, and other ominous idiosyncracies of terrain surrounding the flat ricelands of Solo and Yogyakarta. This encircling periphery of power is completed by Mt. Merapi to the north of Yogyakarta, the mythic forest of Krendhawahana (Bathari Durga's domain) north of Solo, and the coastline and foothills stretching from Parangtritis eastward toward Ponorogo.

The entire area is crisscrossed with spiritual traces of political exiles, legendary ascetics, aspiring kings, and revolutionaries—traces left, for example, by the late fifteenth-century Brawijaya V, Javano-Islamic ascetic heroes of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Hamengkubuwana I and Mangkunagara I of the eighteenth century, and recent figures such as the Indonesian revolutionary General Sudirman.[1] The powers imagined to exist in this area thus reflect specific instances of coincidence between cosmic forces and legendary characters. Inherently supernatural, the region's power has been enhanced by historical energies.

Mt. Lawu itself embodies a complex terrain of supernatural sites, for the real magic of this volcano is said to be located not in its peak—the mountain actually has three summits—but instead at various points scattered along its multiple ridges and within its numerous caves and springs. Within Pringgosari Cave (a small cavern with an unusually slippery interior thought to resemble a vagina), the wayang hero Gathotkaca once

[1] Although the actual path of General Sudirman's famous revolutionary trek through the hills just south of Wonogiri now lies deep beneath a New Order reservoir, it, nevertheless, is represented by a long string of red buoys floating on top. One youth explained to me that Sudirman was so powerful that, if necessary, he could walk on water.

meditated; Quiet Peak (Arga Sunya) was the haunt of the wayang's King Yudhisthira. While nocturnal forces can be heard engaged in otherworldly trading at the spirit market on Lawu's Diyèng Plain, Status Pool (Sendhang Drajad) promises this-worldly promotion, and Jalatundha Cave, extending down, it is said, all the way to the Indian Ocean, provides extensive subterranean refuge for long-term ascetics. The ominously protruding His Highness' Peak (Arga Dalem) remains, in turn, the throne of the spirit-king Sunan Lawu himself.[2]

From the perspective of Central Javanese palaces past, Lawu constituted the eastern anchor for cosmological ties where echoes of Majapahit merged with the supernatural forces inherent within the mountain. The Parangtritis coastline, however, stretched out as a southwestern anchor, securing ties with the Queen of the South and the forces of her ocean. It was here that the late sixteenth-century Central Javanese ruler Sénapati met with this queen, sealing an alliance that future generations of Central Javanese kings would be obliged to maintain.[3] At Dlepih, south of Solo, the source waters of the Solo River contain a similarly charged history. Here, too, Javanese rulers from Sénapati on focused their spiritual energies on political ends.[4] All three of these foci of forces (Lawu, Parangtritis, and Dlepih) and two subsidiary northern foci (Mt. Merapi and the Krendhawahana forest) thus received annual offerings from Central Javanese palaces meant to activate the cosmological circuitry of royal times past.[5]

Ruling monarchs, however, by no means held a monopoly on the

[2] For an introduction to Mt. Lawu, see R. M. Ng. Tiknopranoto and R. Mardisuwignya, *Sejarah Kutha Sala* (Surakarta: Pelajar, n.d.), pp. 37–43, 90–102.

[3] In preparation for defeating the kingdom of Pajang (circa 1587), Sénapati is said to have spent three days with Ratu Kidul in her underwater palace. Ricklefs supplies the following background: "According to Mataram tradition, she was a princess of Pajajaran who had been driven from the court when she refused a marriage arranged by her father. He laid upon her a curse: she was made queen of the spirits with her palace beneath the waters of the Indian Ocean, and would only become a normal woman again on the Day of Judgement" (Ricklefs, *History of Modern Indonesia,* p. 38). For an introduction to Ratu Kidul and her ties with the Kraton Surakarta, see Nancy K. Florida, "The Badhaya Katawang: A Translation of the Song of Kangjeng Ratu Kidul," *Indonesia* 53 (1992): 20–32.

[4] Lore associated with the Solo River can be found in Tiknopranoto and Mardisuwignya, *Sejarah Kutha Sala,* pp. 78–89.

[5] For a detailed description of offerings made to Lawu, see L. Adam, "Het Vorstelijke Offer aan den Lawoe," *Djåwå* 20 (1940): 107–18. The royal custom of sending offerings to Lawu and Parangtritis has continued, almost without interruption, into the present. The conveyance of royal offerings to Dlepih, Merapi, and Krendhawahana, however, has become rather sporadic.

powers these sites were thought to contain. Although much of the historical significance attached to Central Java's supernatural periphery derives from the spiritual campaigns of would-be kings as they retraced the ascetic steps of previous mystical politicos, the promise of kingship was not the only attraction guiding generations of pilgrims. Beyond the isolated rare instances of royal blessings granted lay a vast spectrum of magical powers and esoteric knowledge (ngèlmu) sought by professionals: shamanic dhukun, shadow-puppeteers, thieves, military commanders, religious leaders, court authors, and others whose livelihood depended upon the acquisition of specific skills, both this-worldly and otherwise.

Although their numbers have dwindled substantially, such professionals still perform night vigils in the hope of acquiring specialized talents assured by the possession of ngèlmu. Attempts to grow body hair as a sign of invulnerability eventually lead to Deep Pool (Sendhang Teleng, in Manyaran, Wonogiri District) where one bathes for, or in, power. Dhukun retrieve curing talents from Dhukun Springs (Sumber Dhukun, in Ngebel, Ponorogo District). Shadow-puppeteers increase their performative skills through treks to Sparkling Lake (Tlaga Muncar) on Mt. Merapi. Professional female dancers (*tlèdhèk*) travel to Glittering Rock (Batu Gilang, in Tambakbaya, Sukoharjo District) to enhance their powers of attraction.[6] Thieves who have been discovered and taken a beating find refuge in restorative Recurrence Pond (Blumbang Kangutan, Jatinom District) where wounds are said to heal instantaneously. And Cermé Cave is a multitalented site on Central Java's south coast where puppeteers, dancers, and thieves all meditate on the specifics of their respective professional needs.

In addition to the great supernatural sites associated with royal legends of power and the lesser sites known for professional ngèlmu specifics there are certain spots famed for a particular form of ngèlmu knowledge in a class by itself: *pasugihan* (wealth), an esoteric means of becoming rich. Such sites provide the grounds for contact with a peculiar breed of spirits capable of assuming animal forms. At Jimbun Swamp in the

[6] Each of the sites noted here has a history all its own. "Glittering Rock" refers to a well-worn boulder in the village of Tambakbaya. Long ago, the story goes, Tambakbaya was inundated with rains that threatened to flood the village and ruin its fields, for the Solo River lay nearby. In a dream, a village elder received an inspiration (ilham) informing him of a boulder lodged in the middle of the river; this was the source of the problem. But try as they might, the villagers were unable to dislodge the stone. A second inspiration advised the village to hire a tlèdhèk dancer and gamelan orchestra to accompany the boulder's removal. The advice proved successful, and tlèdhèk dancers have streamed to the site ever since.

Klaten District, for example, large, mottled-white tortoises ensure that mortals who succeed in making contracts with them receive financial rewards. The logic of the contracts rests on a "payback" (*imbalan jasa*) through which one's soul is essentially pawned. As persons who have profited from these contracts age, their skin gradually becomes covered with white patches. When they die, Jimbun profiteers do not ascend directly to heaven but instead are transformed into spirit-tortoises and remain a source of riches for future swamp pilgrims. Although many claim that wealth derived from pasugihan contracts is temporary and cannot be inherited, a privileged economy is nevertheless at work that induces pilgrims to return to Jimbun, repeat the actions of their predecessors, and pass on such talents across generations.[7]

Perhaps the most widely known pasugihan practice is that which assumes the form of a spirit-tiger. In the middle of a forest just east of the Wonogiri District border lies an unmarked grave referred to simply as the Expansive Burial Ground (Sétra Kombor). Here, pilgrims obtain the ngèlmu necessary to transform themselves into a spirit-tiger (*malih macan*) trained in acquisition of wealth. When someone possessing this ngèlmu dies and is buried, a tiger comes to the fresh grave and circles it three times, whereupon the corpse slowly rises of its own accord. The deceased obediently follows the beast back to the forest where the corpse is torn apart and *rebut*-ed by other tigers, and the soul is transformed into a member of the spirit-tiger army.[8]

Pasugihan pursuits represent an access to wealth regarded by many contemporary Central Javanese as, at best, highly questionable. Although some forms of ngèlmu knowledge (especially those associated with powers of invulnerability) are thought to lead to a violent death which, in turn, is likely to produce a misguided soul, only pasugihan

[7] Javanese often distinguish the temporary wealth of pasugihan from *sugih kuna* (old wealth), inheritance from an inexhaustible supply (envisioned as a bottomless chest of jewels). The status of pasugihan sites in contemporary Java is profoundly ambivalent. Most New Order pilgrims to Jimbun (or Jimbung, as the location is occasionally rendered) deny that they will become reincarnated as spirit-tortoises although they admit the likelihood of tell-tale mottled skin in old age. While the amphibious nature of the spirit swamp-creatures of Jimbun supplements the structure of dual identity suggested by imbalan jasa, Jimbun lore reveals that the original pair of spirit-tortoises were actually servants of an ancient kingdom, cursed by their master into their amphibious condition. By answering requests, the king decreed, these tortoises might someday be relieved of their curse.

[8] A lesser-known site for such tigers in the Wonogiri District is located in Mangunharjo. Here, the tiger makes a paw-size hole in the fresh grave and the corpse simply flies out and immediately joins the others for a slametan. Stories about spirit-tigers in Bayat and Ponorogo appear in Tirtawidjaya, Haryadi, Suyono, Karyadi, and Faizah, *Sastra Lisan Jawa*, pp. 143–46.

involves a contractual payback exchange.[9] Moreover, although ngèlmu acquired by specialists such as puppeteers and thieves serves professional ends, pasugihan works primarily to its own end: acquisition of wealth for wealth's sake by a direct exchange of money for soul. Even the most ambitious puppeteers probably would not exchange their souls for, say, better performance skills, were such a thing possible.

Like other forms of ngèlmu, however, pasugihan entails an active pursuit. Mantras, offerings, and ascetic practices (*nglakoni*) including fasting, night vigils, repetitive circumambulation, long-term seclusion, and so on, all work energetically toward the acquisition of empowered knowledge, no matter what its specific nature. If the conventional Javanese terrain of supernatural forces is to be tapped and put to use, ngèlmu must be actively retrieved. Javanese seeking such knowledge at Dlepih, for example, focus precisely on the possibility of retrieval as they sit cross-legged, arms folded, up to their necks in spring water. Dlepih abounds with water snakes. When one of these creatures swims directly at you, its body snaking along on the surface of the water ever so intently focused on your face, at the very moment before it strikes and you are sure that this is a sign, reach out and grab the creature. If your reading is correct, the snake immediately transforms into a keris blade with its own hidden powers. Such a boon is at once recognizable and, by nature, tangible.

Although some pilgrims still work toward ngèlmu rewards at sites such as Dlepih, Jimbun Swamp, and Dhukun Springs, the powers of attraction that the Central Javanese landscape once presented are now, it would seem, in sharp decline. Nowhere was this more evident than on Mt. Lawu on October 19, 1982, the eve of a new Javanese year (1915 Anno Javanico), by Javanese calendrical reckoning the most spiritually charged night of the year. The Eve of the First of Sura (the first month of the Javanese year), as this night is known, has attracted generations of Javanese to Mt. Lawu. Along with Parangtritis, Lawu remains irresistible terrain for Sura vigils. This is not surprising, for at no point is ascetic practice more in tune with supernatural rewards than at the coincidental interface between great topological and calendrical powers.[10]

Although the 1982 Sura trek up Lawu attracted people from what might be referred to as the old school of Javanese asceticism—elderly couples in search of blessings, dhukun in pursuit of ngèlmu, palace emissaries carrying royal offerings, and so on—such characters were far outnumbered by well over one-thousand New Order teenagers, mostly high

[9] Invulnerability ngèlmu, for example, is frequently associated with a violent death.

[10] Thus, on the first of Sura (November 15) in 1947, a group of revolutionary soldiers (Tentara Peladjar) climbed Lawu with an offering on behalf of Indonesia.

school students.[11] During the long hike up the 3,265 meter mountain, I queried students concerning the aim of their venture: "Dunno, just tagging along." Some made vague references to being nature lovers (*pecinta alam*). This apparent aimlessness was striking in light of the conventional significance attached to Sura on Lawu—above all, an occasion for the concentration of spiritual forces—and the physical exhaustion that invariably accompanies such a trip. "The body's not up to it," complained youths as they plodded on, their tired ranks held together by official flags identifying their home schools. The trip constituted, in short, a modern ascetic exercise of sheer endurance with no particular end in sight.

Students occasionally stumbled upon power sites, spots that had attracted old-school ascetics. One adventuresome group of nature lovers equipped with walkie-talkies discovered, for example, Jalatundha Cave. They followed their flashlight beams and groped downward into a large chamber where, by chance, they bumped into the dim figure of a man who had planted himself, cross-legged, in a position of intense meditative concentration. The boys were stunned: "Just like a movie I once saw," whispered one. Hopelessly distracted, the old ascetic turned on the intruders, cursed them, and took off in search of seclusion elsewhere.[12]

The situation on top of the mountain became desperate for the several hundred students who made it that far, for the night grew cold and windy. Unable to light campfires, the youths, nevertheless, succeeded in setting dead trees on fire, more or less randomly. But this tactic soon backfired when winds carried the flames down the mountain to the west and south, flames that turned into extensive forest fires. The Lawu fires raged for five days, and it took close to a week for officials to evacuate all of the students stranded on the mountain.[13] Even the widely publicized attempts of Pakubuwana XII—armed with the Kraton's fire-repelling heirloom lance, Sir Avoidance—failed to stop the flames.[14] In the end, government officials formally charged villagers in the Lawu area for the

[11] Even the palaces, however, apparently were hard pressed to find court servants able to make the climb. I encountered one fellow who had been hired by the Kraton Yogyakarta to convey offerings in the palace's name. Equipped with a knapsack full of flower petals and a Kraton Yogyakarta scarf (*samir*), the hiker was a member of the Yogyakarta Mountain Climbers Club.

[12] Although I had followed the students into the cave—they claimed to be experienced explorers—I accompanied the ascetic out. He was a dhukun from East Java and spent every Suran on Lawu.

[13] On October 21, *Suara Merdeka* headlines reckoned, "Of 497 Pilgrims, So Far 43 Have Reached Slamet."

[14] Sensational follow-up headlines proclaimed: "Pakubawana's Power Keris Extinguished Mt. Lawu's Demon Fire by Remote-Control," *Sinar Pagi Minggu*, November 21, 1982. Some maintain that Pakubuwana XII was armed not with this lance but an heirloom gong.

fires, claiming that the villagers were illegally producing charcoal for profit. In the midst of it all stood a large new sign, unharmed by the fires, near Mt. Lawu's summit. With its unmistakably New Order quotation-marked logic, the sign silently proclaimed, "Di Sini Tempat 'Kramat' "—This Spot is "Sacred."

The decline of the old-school powers of attraction once suggested by peculiarities of terrain is not simply the result of a conscious denial on the part of contemporary Javanese. Such powers are rarely rejected outright as delusions of some premodern past, nor are they deemed totally impossible nowadays, as improbable as dim figures secluded in Jalatundha Cave may seem. Rather, the decline is part of a broader shift of focus to another sort of empowered terrain, a human-made landscape of monuments in the form of grave stones and mausoleums. Although many professionals such as dhukun still meditate up to their necks in spirit-endowed waters in the pursuit of ngèlmu, the spiritual attentions of most contemporary Central Javanese are focused on grave sites and the possible blessings they contain. For superimposed on the supernatural landscape of idiosyncracies is a vast topography of monumental power. It is this topography of monuments that now dominates Javanese spiritual pursuits.

The greatest of such monuments is the enormous complex of mausoleums and graves called Imagiri (Mountain of Mist) near the Parangtritis coastline south of Yogyakarta. That Imagiri dates from the seventeenth-century Javanese ruler Sultan Agung (r. 1613–46) indicates the historical depth of the importance attached to mausoleums in Java. Set on top of a small mountain overlooking the south Java plain and Indian Ocean, Sultan Agung's mausoleum forms the apex of a mausoleum complex whose subordinate tombs fan out and down toward the south. Below Agung are entombed several succeeding centuries of Central Javanese royalty genealogically reckoned to be descendants of the seventeenth-century ruler. Thus, built into Imagiri is a grandiose design that works, top to bottom, by a logic of hierarchy. It is a mountain of monumentalization, a monumental replacement, perhaps, for cosmic mountains like Lawu, constructed to concentrate otherworldly forces in the form of an enshrined dynasty. While Central Javanese rulers descended from Agung would continue to appeal to forces inherent in Mt. Lawu, Parangtritis, Dlepih, and other foci from the old cosmology, Imagiri expanded across generations to signify the dominance of mausoleums in the kramat topography.[15]

[15] For a brief history of Imagiri, see R. Ng. Martohastono, *Riwayat Pasarean Imogiri Mataram* (N.p.: Imogiri, n.d.). *Imogiri* is a variant transliteration of *Imagiri;* it is also the Indonesian spelling for the town associated with this gravesite.

The sense of authoritative unity manifest in Imagiri's structure is evident in a tale associated with the complex's construction. When Sultan Agung decided to build Imagiri, the story goes, he invited an ascetic well known for his magical powers to see what might be produced. The ascetic responded by disappearing, digging a hole into which he tossed one thousand snakes and geese, and instantaneously returning with this question: "Hear that sound?" "Yes," replied Agung, for the squawking was most audible even from miles away. "Is it from one source or two?" asked the ascetic. "One source," responded the sultan. "Not two?" prodded the old man. "It is from one being," Agung proclaimed, "and if I am wrong my kingdom will be divided in half with you." Both men then flew to the hole where the sultan's awesome answer had now taken shape as one gigantic naga snake with wings and feet: a single being known as Sir Opening-to-Awakening (Kyai Mangularwungu). Confronted with this singular creation, the ascetic died on the spot. In the future, the naga would circle Central Javanese palaces at night on the eve of the death of a king or queen, the ominous sound of flapping wings indicating that another royal candidate was ready for Imagiri entombment.

For several centuries, the Imagiri mausoleum complex has, in many respects, epitomized a ghostly unification of royal power. Even after the mideighteenth-century division of the realm into Surakarta and Yogyakarta, royalty from both courts would be entombed at Imagiri and supernatural forces governing a unified, kramat "Java" sustained. (The first Surakartan king to be entombed at Imagiri, Pakubuwana II, was initially interred in Solo's Laweyan graveyard but later transferred to Imagiri because His Majesty's corpse kept rising out of the Laweyan grave site. This act of dissatisfaction won him future notoriety as the "Floating King.") To the extent that Imagiri persists as a monumental emblem recalling one "Java," its attraction derives both from the blessings obtainable at the individual mausoleums of its spirit-inhabitants and its status as a singular site that seems to have transcended the vagaries of Central Javanese dynastic history. Cemented into the pyramidal structure of Imagiri is an exemplary system of hierarchy at once fully bureaucratic and founded on privilege. Each mausoleum is attended by a caretaker (*juru kunci,* "keeper of the keys") of appropriate court rank and title. Other than during regular visiting hours, mausoleum doors are unlocked only at the command of members of the royal family.[16] Commoners fortunate enough to be present when royalty arrive may, however, tag

[16] Amen Budiman notes that in the colonial days, the Dutch Resident and Assistant Resident also were permitted access to Imagiri on an individual basis. For an introduction to Imagiri regulations, see Budiman's essay entitled "Imagiri," *Suara Merdeka,* August 20, 1982, p. 3.

along and hope for an overflow of blessings. "This is the way it has been," I was informed by one middle-ranking mausoleum caretaker, "since the time of Sultan Agung."

Imagiri was not, of course, the first monumentalized burial site in Central Java; its real significance derives, as suggested, both from its location and form. Agung's immediate predecessors lie side-by-side entombed at Kuta Gede near Yogya. Although there is a certain acknowledged hierarchy of grave placement at Kuta Gede (as is true of most kramat grave complexes in Central Java), Agung's forebears seem to have been less far-sighted or, at least, less ambitious about the prospects of posthumous upward mobility than Agung himself. No other Javanese mausoleum complex reigns in the manner of Imagiri.

Nevertheless, Imagiri is rivaled in its attraction of pilgrims searching for blessings by hundreds of other kramat grave sites scattered throughout Java. Some of the best-known sites belong to Javano-Islamic saints and prophets—power figures who far predate Agung. Others belong to legendary characters, including powerful courtiers of kingdoms past, commoners who miraculously gave birth to future Javanese kings, and figures known for their ascetic prowess and ngèlmu talents. Javanese professionals of the sort noted earlier often supplement customary ascetic exercises by visiting the graves of their deceased counterparts. Those in search of invulnerability magic and martial arts skills, for example, attend the Temuireng grave of Ki Ageng Atasangin, a leading warrior of Jaka Tingkir's famed late sixteenth-century court. Dhukun pursuing midwifery visit the Bukit Breja grave of G. A. Tulakbronto (an alleged daughter of Brawijaya V) who in exile subsisted solely on turmeric. Mystics seeking political connections frequent the site of Pak Jayeng's interment in Kartasura, for Jayeng was a dhukun known to be in the service of President Sukarno. Puppeteers pay homage at the grave of Nyai Panjangmas (a female dhalang who along with her husband served the court of Sultan Agung) in the village of Nggeledheg, Klaten District.[17] Musicians and dancers offer their respects to Rara Pembayun, a daughter of Sénapati buried in the Bantul District's Karang Lo. (Pembayun lured her father's rival, Ki Ageng Mangir, to his death by posing as an irresistible dancer. Once lured to Sénapati's court, Mangir was forthwith decapitated.) Literati and students travel to Klaten District's mausoleum of

[17] Kyai and Nyai Panjangmas are the dhalang's equivalent to Sultan Agung, for many respectable puppeteers trace descent from this couple. Kyai Panjangmas is believed to be the product of a union between Agung and a Mataram concubine buried at Imagiri. For a history of Kyai and Nyai Panjangmas, see R. Tanaja, *Riwajat Pangeran Pandjangmas: Leluhuripun Para Dalang Karaton Mataram-Kartasura-Surakarta* (Surakarta: R. Tanaja, 1971).

R. Ng. Ronggawarsita, the most renowned of all Surakarta court authors, in hopes of receiving divine inspiration (*ilham*) of the type thought to have motivated the nineteenth-century author himself. And thieves, police, and litigators all converge on Balak in the District of Sukoharjo, for here lies Ki Balak, an early twentieth-century thief cast as a sort of Javanese Robin Hood.

The old cosmology manifest in peculiarities of terrain has thus been wholly converted into a human-made landscape, a constructed topography of monumental significance ranging from the lofty concentration of regal aspirations associated with Imagiri to a scattering of isolated sites attuned to specific requests. The vast majority of contemporary Central Javanese are primarily concerned, however, neither with the royal implications of the former nor the ngèlmu-knowledge specifics of the latter. For what now inspires most visits to kramat graves by New Order pilgims is the hope of being granted overall blessings (pangèstu) whose bestowal promises everyday well-being and a general state of slamet. Although such blessings are conventionally spoken of in highly respectful and explicitly spiritual terms, behind requests for blessings lie motives that are geared, it would seem, toward essentially material ends.

Material Pursuits, Deferred Rewards

One of the more celebrated Central Javanese grave sites is that of the Javano-Islamic figure Sunan Tembayat, whose mausoleum complex is located in the present-day Bayat Subdistrict forty kilometers southwest of Solo. Javanese chronicles trace the history of this complex to the early sixteenth century. In 1498, a wealthy ruler of the north coast area of Semarang, Adipati Pandan Arang, gave up his riches and realm and adopted, instead, the life of an ascetic guided by Javano-Islamic mystical principles. Pandan Arang moved to the peripheral village of Bayat where he assumed the name Sunan Tembayat and devoted the last dozen years of his life to praying, meditating, and imparting mystical knowledge to others so inclined.[18] Upon his death in 1512, a mausoleum was erected in Tembayat's honor.

In the years that followed, Sunan Tembayat achieved legendary status

[18] One of Sunan Tembayat's students is said to have been Ki Ageng Gribig whose Jatinom mausoleum is the site of the apem rebutan noted in Chapter 6. For a detailed history of Pandan Arang and the Bayat mausoleum, see Amen Budiman, *Semarang Riwayatmu Dulu,* vol. 1 (Semarang: Tanjung Sari, 1978). See also Soewignja, *Kjai Ageng Pandhanarang* (Batavia: Balé Poestaka, 1938); and R. L. Mellema, *Tjarijos Lalampahanipoen Ki Pandan-Arang ing Tembajat: Petikan Saking Serat Babad Demak* (Soerakarta: de Bliksem, 1929).

Fig. 18. The mausoleum of Sunan Tembayat, 1982.

as Java's tenth *wali,* or "saint," a somewhat heterodox addition to mainstream Javanese Islamic history, which conventionally pays tribute to the "Nine Saints" (Wali Sanga). As Tembayat's posthumous fame grew, the Bayat mausoleum was upgraded and numerous commemorative stone gates and walls were added. Sultan Agung himself is said to have sought the spiritual aid of Tembayat. Following a spectacular defeat in his military campaign against the Dutch in Batavia in 1629, Agung turned his attentions elsewhere. Ricklefs summarizes:

> In 1630 a rebellion broke out which seems to have been led by religious leaders in the area of Tembayat (the grave site of the *wali* Sunan Bayat); Agung massacred the rebels. In 1633 he undertook some form of pilgrimage to the holy site at Tembayat, perhaps in an attempt to subdue the spiritual as well as the military power of the opposition. He erected a ceremonial gateway which still stands, and legends tell of him receiving supernatural powers from the spirit of Sunan Bayat. It was also at this time that Agung officially abandoned the use of the Indian Śaka era for court purposes and adopted a hybrid Javanese-Islamic calendrical system (*Anno Javanico*).[19]

[19] Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia,* p. 43.

During the colonial era when the mausoleum fell under the jurisdiction of the Kraton Surakarta, Bayat was granted a status exempt (*pardikan*) from the substantial taxation that burdened other territories under palace rule. Commemorative upgrading of Sunan Tembayat's site continued through the early twentieth-century rule of Pakubuwana X on into the 1970s.

The story of Pandan Arang's conversion to a life of Islamic asceticism is well known to many Central Javanese. Pandan Arang was a great lover of gold and jewels; in the department of worldly wealth, his ambitions knew no bounds. At least such was the case until Sunan Kalijaga, the most famous of the Nine Saints, visited Semarang. To demonstrate the relative value of wealth, Kalijaga pulled out a shovel, concentrated for a moment, and then got to work. Each shovelful of earth he overturned miraculously transformed itself into gold. Stunned by this act of power, Pandan Arang followed Kalijaga's command, abandoned his wealth, and retired to Bayat for seclusion and meditation. This was a wise decision, for even before the new convert arrived at his destination, the performative powers of his word (sabda) had already been activated. En route, Pandan Arang responded to a series of incidents—encounters with thieves, hosts, and fellow travelers—in words that immediately were transformed into place names. By the time he reached Bayat, Pandan Arang had left behind a trail of magical pronouncements that would later serve as physical evidence of his ascetic journey.[20]

Pandan Arang's apparent rejection of the material world for the spiritual is a classic riches-to-rags tale. The real road to power is not through the acquisition of wealth but through dramatic, almost transcendental, denial. Only by this route will one's true powers, remind older Central Javanese, be realized. Many New Order pilgrims paying homage to Tembayat's tomb give the story's moral, however, an inspired twist. "Pandan Arang tossed away his wealth," explained one young pilgrim from Solo, "so there must be a lot of it around here. If you want to get rich, this is the place to pray!" This now common reading of the Bayat tale moves along a sort of logical shortcut that arrives precisely at the point of Pandan Arang's presumed departure, and wealth abandoned assumes a novel significance.

Although there is something particularly New Order about this reading, it nevertheless derives, in part, from old-school reasoning concerning ascetic pursuits and rewards, for such rewards are characteristically tangible. Just as proper concentration at Dlepih may transform snakes into

[20] Among the place names left by Pandan Arang are the towns of Salatiga, Boyolali, and Wedi.

heirloom keris-blades, so, too, dirt, under the right conditions, may be transformed into shovelfuls of gold. The conditions for the transformation depends on one's power of concentration, just the kind of power that Kalijaga's mystical digging ingeniously displayed. Couched in otherworldly terms, Javanese ascetic exercises are imagined to produce, with practice, real results. Indeed, what converted Pandan Arang was not a lengthy sermon but the miraculous production of material closest to his heart.

Old-school ascetic exercises are not, however, as conspicuously materialist as the contemporary twist on the Bayat story would have it. Nor are they somehow wholly spiritual. Indeed, the material/spiritual distinction so central to New Order cultural production—"I was inspired to build a Project of that sort in Indonesia, only more complete and more perfect, adapted to fit the situation and developments in Indonesia, both materially [materiil] and spiritually [spirituil]," Mrs. Soeharto effused over her plans for Mini—is *itself* displaced as ascetics reproduce professional powers and talents in the form of ngèlmu, tangible knowledge. Generations of ascetically inclined merchants (mostly from the north-coast city of Semarang and from Solo) have traveled to Bayat in search of just such knowledge. As an elderly Semarang businessman who had made the trek to Bayat for most of his adult life noted in 1983, "I didn't come here looking for money. Just look at the place, there's none here."[21] What attracted the old man to night vigils at Bayat was an informal grave lying just outside the central mausoleum. This grave was marked by a long, flat stone ringed by dozens of well-worn stony protuberances, a grave rumored to belong to Pandan Arang's accountant. With eyes closed, the Semarang businessman attempted to count the gravestone's knobs, groping his way along in darkness. If, after several times around the stone, his counting repeatedly produced exactly the same total—the true total might vary from night to night—then business would flourish. The man did not reveal the results of that night's calculations, but he looked pleased. Before exercising his talents at the accountant's grave, the man had supplicated the spirit of Sunan Tembayat with offerings of flower petals and incense at the mausoleum proper. He would spend the rest of the night by himself in a dark corner of the graveyard outside, perfectly quiet.[22]

[21] Sunan Tembayat's mausoleum is, in fact, located in relatively desolate terrain beyond the fertile rice plains to the north although not as peripheral as the arid hills to the south.

[22] This counting practice also occurs at grave sites not explicitly associated with financial legends. The 360-plus steps leading up to Imagiri's mausoleums customarily elude visitors' attempts to arrive at the same number on the way up and down.

The strategies of batik merchants seeking ngèlmu knowledge at Bayat are equally active although different in approach. Solonese merchants regularly assist in the annual changing of the white shroud (*langsé*) draped over the tomb. The old shroud is removed and cut into square pieces, which are later distributed as amulets (jimat), tangible materializations of Tembayat's powers.[23] On my first trip to Bayat to witness the changing of the shroud, the mausoleum caretaker inquired about the purpose of my visit. I offered what I thought was a straightforward response: I was a student from the United States researching Javanese customs for my thesis. Given Bayat's fame I was naturally drawn to this site for material to aid my research. Although the old man seemed to understand immediately, he did not regale me with the Tembayat lore I had hoped for but instead disappeared into the mausoleum. Moments later, he returned with a piece of yellowed shrouding that had covered Sunan Tembayat's grave the previous year. "With this material [*bahan*]," he assured me, "your thesis will be completed. Have no fear!" This remnant of old-school knowledge constituted, again, a form intensely at odds with modern material/spriritual (or, when confronted by research demands, material/analytical) formulations, a sense of material so saturated with, say, history, that its powers assume a life of their own. It is precisely the peculiarly material feel of such knowledge that prefigures (just as a logic of domestication inherent in wedding practices facilitated the eventual domestication of those practices as customary tokens of cultural inheritance) the possibility of this material's New Order conversion into an expressly spiritual economy that works toward the this-worldly accumulation of, in a word, wealth.

Although Bayat enjoyed a modest though steady stream of old-style pilgrims for many years, its attraction skyrocketed from the early 1970s on. Jakarta Javanese luminaries refurbished the site and provided the village with an asphalt road, a road "suitable for Mercedes" as one Bayat woman put it. Modern, patrolled parking facilities were added. Taking all this as a sign of success, great masses of New Order pilgrims now flood the mausoleum for Thursday-night vigils. These new pilgrims, Bayat graveyard caretakers informed me, are most concerned with wealth itself. Because such prayers border on the now scandalous logic of pasugihan contracts, Bayat caretakers routinely advise visitors that the

[23] There is a long history of batik business ties between Bayat and Solo, particularly Solo's batik-producing neighborhood of Laweyan (whose graveyard claims to hold a wife of Pandan Arang although Bayat claims the same person). As do other pardikan areas, Bayat produced its own batik for Solonese traders. Thus, business and kramat concerns were doubly connected, informed by both ascetic and trade practices.

Fig. 19. Caretakers and pilgrims at the mausoleum of Gusti Radèn Panembahan Pangéran Ragil (grandson of Sunan Tembayat), on Mt. Malang (Bayat Subdistrict) for the annual changing of the shroud in 1982.

Sunan's tomb is *not* a pasugihan site. And yet this protestation itself appears to have the reverse effect of redoubling the attentions of Bayat's recent converts on the possibility that Pandan Arang's abandoned wealth must be somewhere and that it is only a matter of time, and timing, before it is miraculously revealed.[24]

Although the Bayat mausoleum now stands as an unintended monument to New Order concerns with wealth, like other sacred sites it also receives a number of other, less grandiose, more obviously domestically inclined graveside requests: health for one's sick child, a good mate for one's daughter, a promotion for oneself. Such requests are delivered through prayers and acts of supplication to the legendary spirits associated with these sites in essentially the same manner as they are directed toward one's ancestors. But blessings from immediate ancestors are generally taken for granted because relations with one's elders are extended and idealized after their death. Blessings from legendary figures of power, however, are by no means guaranteed. The point of lengthy Thursday-night vigils at sites like Tembyat's tomb is to put oneself in the right place, at the right time, and then *wait.*

Key to the chance of receiving blessings at such sites is, not surprisingly, staying awake, a quasi-ascetic gesture of respect and wishfulness known in Javanese as *melèk.* The crucial importance of staying awake for blessings is evident in a Central Javanese tale about two Javano-Islamic ascetics, Sèh Maulana Makribi and Sèh Béla Belu, who centuries ago, they say, meditated for heavenly boons. Béla Belu did not sleep at all, but ate to his heart's content. Maulana Makribi successfully abstained from eating, as ascetics are thought to do, but weary from hunger dozed off occasionally. The former eventually got what he was after; the latter happened to be asleep at the critical moment when boons were bestowed.[25]

Unlike ngèlmu pursuits of specific knowledge and talents, melèk outings thus entail relatively inactive stints of unfocused waiting. The atmosphere in graveyards and mausoleums throughout Central Java on Thursday nights resembles that of an informal, somewhat ghostly picnic

[24] Faced with this flood of New Order visitors and recent monumentalization, Bayat local history has reserved a trace of the legend's power for itself. Some Bayat elders maintain that Sunan Tembayat is not really buried at all but instead *muksa*-ed. They point to a spot near the village's ancient small mosque, saying that this is where Tembayat meditated and taught and, thus, the real site for concentration.

[25] The tale occasionally receives an altruistic twist as the former proceeds to divide up the boon with the latter. In another variation on this tale (from the Mt. Merapi region), Seh Béla Belu retains his role, but Sèh Maulana Makribi is replaced by one Jatiaking.

as clusters of visitors smoke, snack, and gossip the night away. Moreover, unlike ngèlmu rewards—a retrieved mantra, keris blade, and so on—the results of these Thursday-night outings are normally deferred. A desired promotion, for example, may take months if it comes at all. When one's request *is* fulfilled, as sometimes happens, an offering is made to the site, an offering of incense and flower petals indistinguishable from that made at the time of requests. Busy Thursday-night scenes at popular sites, thus, give the impression that fulfillment is quite possible not only because many visitors are present but because any one of the hundreds of these visitors may, perhaps, be expressing gratitude for a blessing already received. Certain grateful contributions—most often in the form of wall clocks—on display at mausoleum complexes add to this sense of possibility: that waiting will, in time, pay off. In cases of extraordinary satisfaction, the entire site may be rebuilt by a grateful pilgrim. The fulfillment of a wish thus appears to reflect more on the site itself than on the ascetic practice or innate powers of the visitor. For the logic of blessings at kramat grave sites now operates not so much by personal fortitude or talented concentration as it does by an uncanny sense of coincidence.[26]

With more actively engaged otherworldly pursuits increasingly peripheralized, the sense of coincidence attached to sacred grave sites has assumed a new intensity. One of the most common requests brought to kramat graves by New Order youths concerns high school final exams. The proper approach, students say, is *not* to ask directly for a high grade. Instead, one simply asks to remain calm (*tenang*) while writing the exam. With success, the particular questions chosen by the teacher will coincide perfectly with the few answers a student has managed to memorize. Dedicated largely to nonaccidental coincidence, kramat practices have been converted into a sort of otherworldly lottery with winning lottery numbers themselves being one of the most frequently sought blessings. Through coincidence, the specific histories that once informed pilgrims of a site's special talents are lost; what appears instead is a generic sense of possibility that may be attached, repeatedly, to *any* sacred site. It is not surprising that in Java there are multiple graves for the same legendary figure because the various histories behind such figures are extremely local. The grave of Sèh Maulana Makribi, for example, is claimed by at least a half-dozen villages in Java. (Within a fifty kilometer

[26] It is, no doubt, for this reason that shadow puppeteers, dhukun, and other characters of power maintain that ascetic sites in the geological kramat terrain (of springs, mountains, and so on) are for them and *not* graveyards (save the graves of their professional predecessors, such as Nyai Panjangmas). Kramat graves, they maintain, are for those obsessed with wealth.

radius alone, Makribi is buried in at least four places: Parangtritis, Kuta Gede, Karang Lo, and Mt. Merapi.) Although this contradictory profusion of sites may have presented problems for old-school ascetics—dhukun and other professionals argue at great length about the true location of Makribi's grave—most modern pilgrims seem oblivious to all this as they routinely visit the various Makribi sites on successive Thursday nights, the more the better. It is timing that is of the utmost importance if coincidence is to have a chance.[27]

Requests made by New Order pilgrims are invariably prefaced by a generalized request for overall blessings, a brief but all-encompassing prayer offered in exalted High Javanese, which runs something like this: "Dear _____ [name of the spirit, e.g., Sunan Tembayat] who rests in this place, my humble visit before Your Highness begs for Your blessings [pangèstu], oh honored _____ [name the spirit again]. For blessings, good health, and well-being [wilujeng, High Javanese for slamet] free of misfortune." Although additional requests may then be tacked on—"And I humbly beg for a quick promotion"—New Order Javanese tend to opt for overall blessings and leave it at that. The chances of success for highly specific requests are regarded, in fact, as extremely slim; for most Javanese, speedy promotions to high positions appear about as likely as winning the national lottery. "I think that He knows what you are here for," reckoned one young man from Solo. "You don't need to get too detailed." Given the New Order spiritual economy's preoccupation with wealth noted earlier, the most likely reason contemporary Javanese do not ask for money outright—"one-million rupiah, please"—is the likelihood that a request of such specificity would rarely, if ever, be fulfilled.[28]

But this is only one side of the spiritual dilemma encountered by contemporary pilgrims, for the more general the request, however, the more *ambiguous* the fulfillment. Just as New Order offerings at "traditional" domestic and village events are aimed at generalized ends that leave Javanese increasingly uncertain that an offering is complete, the bestowal of overall blessings is not so obvious. Thus, whether requests are cast in the precise terms of an otherworldly lottery or in the vague language of

[27] When I first began making Thursday-night visits to kramat grave sites, I was amazed by how historically uninformed many Javanese pilgrims were. Leaving the details of their requests in the hands of mausoleum caretakers, some pilgrims did not even know the name of the entombed spirit. Few had much knowledge about the history of sites, except for well-known sites like that of Sunan Tembayat.

[28] Mausoleum caretakers noted that although for many Thursday-night visitors *pangèstu* now means getting rich, to their knowledge no one has ever asked directly for cash. The avoidance of requesting a high grade on high school exams follows the same reasoning.

general well-being, their fulfillment normally remains elusive. Thursday-night scenes at kramat grave sites are essentially portraits of waiting, repeated returns to a scene of chance motivated by "tradition"'s meta-spook imperative to always make up for what may have been left out or, in this case, not yet fulfilled. And such scenes are brought to life, most significantly, by routine gestures of supplication and prostration.

Outside the door to a mausoleum, Thursday-night pilgrims wait for their turn to enter. Inside, a caretaker burns incense and receives donations as the line of supplicants slowly winds its way around the long horizontal tombstone (*kijing*) counterclockwise. Prayers and requests are whispered in High Javanese; offerings of flower petals are scattered along the top of the stone. At each point in the supplicatory sequence, prayerful bows of obeisance are offered. Immediately in front of the tombstone, visitors perform acts of sungkeman, prolonged displays of reverence like those described for weddings in Chapter 5, until the next person moves into position. At the heart of graveside practices before figures of power, thus, emerges the desire to prostrate oneself fully before authority, regardless of the likelihood that requests will be fulfilled. It is as if the sense of a firmly planted, hierarchically structured "Java" represented a blessing in itself. Dutifully maintained in Thursday-night kramat scenes of deference, this is an other "Java" ideally removed from the contradictions of its own creation whether those contradictions are manifest in the various genealogies of royal power that the Imagiri mausoleum complex would seem, in retrospect, to reunify or in the discrepancy between what is, and what is not, realized through New Order spiritual endeavors.

Securing the Intangible

In light of contemporary concerns with "tradition" and monuments, the mausoleum business prospers in a way that it never has before. What remains of a world of magically charged sites is a landscape of waiting, a relatively resigned world bolstered essentially by devotion to hierarchy and the coincidental possibility of generalized, customarily elusive blessings. Because of this, many sacred sites have experienced substantial remodeling and conversion into idealized spaces for deference paid, rather than ngèlmu knowledge taken. Lost in this spiritual economy are the empowering specifics—whether expressed in terms of techniques or ends—that once activated ascetic pursuits. Gained is a monumentalized sense of "Java" dedicated, through deference, to the promise of its own

fulfillment, a constantly deferred promise indicating that whatever might have been left out will, eventually, be recovered.

The monuments themselves thus stand as replicated signs that a potential recovery of this other "Java" *appears* to be in process and that this process ritually requires prolonged periods of waiting punctuated by gestures of obeisance. What is recalled in such pilgrimages to the sacred is not simply the possibility of personal recovery—of health, status, wealth, well-being—but the figure of "Java" itself or, more exactly, the apparent elusiveness that necessarily informs such a figure. "In the address to follow . . . I have dared to lift a small tip of the veil to show how in the wayang lies hidden the secret Javanese knowledge concerning the deepest significance of life," Mangkunagara VII had proclaimed in 1932 as if foreseeing the possibility of future recollections of the hidden, a "secret Javanese knowledge." Countering the highly tangible nature of ngèlmu rewards, this form of knowledge derives its power from its very intangibility. And what more appropriately endowed sites could there be for lingering in the power of the intangible than mausoleums containing the remains of legendary figures from "Java"'s past, ideally positioned for service in the present?

In this spirit, the Mangkunagaran Palace now hosts pilgrimage tours of sacred sites in an effort to expand spiritual public relations both with otherworldly "Javanese" figures from the past of this palace and with the growing numbers of New Order souls who would pay obeisance to such figures, particularly when pilgrims are members of Jakarta's elite. It is through Mangkunagaran genealogical charts, of course, that Mrs. Soeharto herself claims royal descent. During the cosmologically auspicious month of Sura in 1982, for example, the Mangkunagaran tour focused on sites in the Wonogiri District associated with Raden Mas Sahid during his 1750s military and mystical campaign to become Central Java's ruler (before he was installed by the Dutch as a semi-independent prince with the title Mangkunagara I). The midday tour included three grave sites and one sacred spring, all within a ten-kilometer radius. The first grave, located on a modest knoll surrounded by flat farmland, belonged to Princess Kusumapatahati, a wife of Sahid. Several van-loads of upper middle-class women from Jakarta and Solo arrived at 11 a. m., right on schedule. Most of the women spoke of Mrs. Soeharto as though they knew her although they were from a social stratum several levels below that of the First Lady. The guide, a prosperous Solonese man in his early sixties, previously had accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Soeharto on this and other tours.

Fig. 20. Pilgrims pay obeisance at the tomb of Princess Kusumapatahati (a wife of Mangkunagara I) on Mt. Wijil (Wonogiri District) in 1982.

After a brief welcoming speech by a Mangkunagaran official, the women gathered at the entrance to the mausoleum. Recently refurbished, this was an airy building (provided with windows and a double front door) of 1930s colonial design like that commonly used for country bungalows. Because the mausoleum was too small to accommodate all of these visitors at once, they entered in groups of three or four and slowly made their way to the focus of their attraction: the princess's marble tomb. For most of the women, attempts at the conventional ndhodhok approach—a constricting maneuver of respect, which, as noted in Chapter 5, resembles a sort of ambulatory squatting—proved difficult and many simply crawled toward the tomb. This was done without any apparent embarrassment. One by one, the women displayed reverential submissiveness at the foot of the tomb. Some pressed their lips to the cool marble floor then breathed heavily through cupped hands as if inhaling blessings; others prostrated themselves flat out with palms open in anticipation. One woman seemed to suck at a corner of the tomb. All performed prolonged acts of sungkeman obeisance and then ceremoniously sprinkled great handfuls of flower petals on top of the stone.

The rounds of obeisance at the first site took well over an hour. Rounds at the remaining grave sites on the tour were less dramatic because the women were beginning to tire, yet the same spirit of submission reigned as the search for blessings continued.[29] The second site exhibited the grave of Adipati Kudanawarsa, Mangkunagara I's chief courtier, and a flat rock upon which, it is claimed, Prince Sahid once sat. The third stop, the grave of Princess Kusumapatahati's father, was cut short because most women were anxious to get on to the final site, Boldness Pool (Sendhang Siwani). Here, Sahid had been revived after a temporary defeat; the springs, the guide pointed out, provided the spiritual strength necessary to continue. In 1980, Jakarta patrons had renovated the site and constructed a concrete wall of New Order bas-relief design depicting Prince Sahid's adventures. Impressed by both the wall and the guide's

[29] The women's special enthusiasm at the grave of Princess Kusumapatahati may also have derived from the fact that she was a *woman* of note. That some mausoleums of female royal ancestors have received special remodeling attention suggests not only the importance attached to these ancestors as the generatrixes of Javanese royalty, but also the significance of New Order women like Mrs. Soeharto as the producers of "tradition." The Keblokan mausoleum for B. R. A. Sumanarsa, grandmother of Mangkunagara I, is a popular site on blessings tours. It was upgraded in the early 1980s and now features a miniature aristocratic *joglo* roof design. The interior is quaint: white lace shrouding parted with a ribbon; a wooden rocker with a wayang figure in the seat; a Victorian mirror, a dressing table with hair brushes, perfumes, and so on. Above the front door hangs an official Indonesian Garuda plaque.

tale, the women immediately fell to their knees in prayer then filled bottles with "boldness" water. "Even Mrs. Soeharto didn't pray at the pool when she visited there last year," remarked the guide on the trip home.

More evident than the women's obvious sincerity during the afternoon tour was the guide's totally un-tongue-in-cheek delivery. Ever since the first stone was laid at the Mt. Awakening mausoleum in anticipation of the Soehartos' future entombment, the Mangkunagaran Palace has treated its Jakarta guest-pilgrims with a wholeheartedness equaled only by that of the pilgrims themselves. There is thus a circuit of mutual respect between the Mangkunagaran and its privileged pilgrims despite the inherent contradictions of status between the two worlds of prestige, one inhabited by the remnant traces of rulers past, the other by figures from the present system of rule. Indeed, this circuit is made possible precisely in the shadow of the other "Java" that kramat sites religiously project, a partially sequestered domain demanding, from *all,* unconditional deference.

No doubt inspired by the popularity of its tours as well as the example of the Soeharto mausoleum on Mt. Awakening, in the early 1980s the Mangkunagaran Palace began expanding its ancestors. In the middle of Solo's Brengosan neighborhood lay the crumbling grave of someone known simply as "Great Sir" (Ndara Ageng), a character rumored to have been a courtier of Mangkunagara I. The grave was almost unknown outside the neighborhood; except for a self-appointed caretaker and a few local elders, most Solonese did not pay it much mind. In July 1982, however, the neighborhood head received a surprising letter from the Mangkunagaran Palace saying that weekly offerings should be made. As this news leaked, the site's popularity among Thursday-night pilgrims grew steadily. Then another letter arrived announcing plans to move the grave to an area near other figures associated with Mangkunagara I. Great Sir was flooded with offerings until the day he departed.

Although Mangkunagaran and similar moves to expand "Java"'s genealogy of ancestral power work along relatively familiar lines whereby royal lineages increasingly incorporate spirits before whom it would seem only natural to bow, the recuperation of spirits such as Great Sir nevertheless reflects a particular anxiety in New Order times concerning the cultural uncertain. Just as dhanyang are drained of the specific powers they once conveyed and bersih désa now represent themselves as so many instances of "local tradition," kramat sites are also prone to structural remodeling. As noted earlier, a substantially refurbished grave site indicates, among other things, an individual success story, the result of a

sudden flow of blessings received. This inherent logic by which grave sites are, from time to time, remodeled, facilitates a broader recuperation of all that might lie outside "Java"'s cultural field. For not only must the problematic uncertainties that some kramat sites present New Order visions of "tradition" be contained, the process of containment itself *depends* on encounters with possible transgressions for "Java" to be able to redefine its limits and extend its field of power.

Given its notorious history of underworld connections, by 1983, Balakan (in the Sukoharjo District just south of Solo) represented just the kind of uncertainty which seems to guarantee eventual remodeling. For years, Balakan had been a well-known spot for thieves, lawyers, police, gangsters, and others associated in one way or another with, as the caretaker phrased it, "issues of litigation": "Instead of fussing around with red tape, they'd rather come here." The site is dedicated solely to Ki Balak, a congenial, highly skilled thief who stole from Dutch and Javanese of note residing in Solo in the 1930s and early 1940s and distributed the loot to peasants back home. Although stories about such characters are still numerous in Central Java—the late nineteenth-century Solonese thief Kyai Precet, for example, also remembered for dividing up his booty among the poor, is said to have never harmed commoners with his formidable ngèlmu—Ki Balak apparently was in a class by himself.[30]

Before 1983, Balakan had provided a dimly lit scene set on a small hill surrounded by a muddy stream, a shady site where petty criminals mingled with police although the distinction between these two categories is by no means clear in New Order times. In light of certain 1983 incidents when the Soeharto regime disposed of alleged criminals through a clandestine operation known enigmatically, but simply, as the "Mysterious Killer" (Penembak Misterius), the site's mood changed radically. This change was facilitated, however, by a coincidental bestowal of Balakan blessings on a Solonese man who owned an automobile business that suddenly began to flourish. Having profited greatly from his visits to Balakan, out of gratitude the man subsidized extensive renovations of the site. A spacious, freshly plastered one-story building now housed a shiny marble gravestone decorated with white lace shrouding. There was an atypically modern brick fireplace for incense, a collection of wall clocks, and lime-green wall-to-wall carpeting, all brightly illuminated by banks of fluorescent lights. At the entrance to the building stood a life-size concrete statue of a white horse. This was the clue to the source of

[30] Kyai Precet's grave remains unmoved although it lies conspicuously in the middle of a street in downtown Solo.

Balakan's recent renovations; horses of the same form ornament the grounds of Solo's Patient [Sabar] Motors automobile business.

As notable as these signs of satisfaction were, one last form of renovation was even more striking. Next to the concrete horse stood a new ticket-window where all visitors registered and made a small contribution before entering the site. Although registration has become common practice at larger, more established kramat grave sites—Bayat, for example, provides a similar log book for pilgrims to sign if they wish—the ticket-window gave the impression that one was about to enter a downtown movie theater. Moreover, pilgrims at Balakan were now required to produce their Indonesian state identification cards. In return, visitors received two small packets of dried flowers, taken from Ki Balak's grave, for spiritual protection. Despite the evidence left by Patient Motor's owner, the caretaker insisted that this was not a place for pasugihan and noted, instead, success in exams, promotions, and similarly upright causes, while stressing the value of overall blessings in the form of pangèstu one might receive by prolonged acts of supplication in the mausoleum. Although some visitors still gathered outside under the darkness of a massive banyan tree and exchanged tips on lottery numbers, through the coincidental successes of the "anticriminal" operation and Patient Motors, Balakan had been converted into a typically "sacred" 1980s scene of deference.

Simultaneously reflecting New Order concerns with cultural security and kramat visions of blessings bestowed, this renovating logic of monumentalization now dominates otherworldly sites in such a way that *not* to remodel may be scandalous. Built in 1921, by 1983 the mausoleum of Surakarta's nineteenth-century court author R. Ng. Ronggawarsita was reckoned to need remodeling. Newspapers conveyed the worries of the mausoleum's caretakers in an effort to raise funds for renovation.[31] Well-informed frequenters of the mausoleum interpreted the site's condition as a sign of the very "era of madness" (*zaman édan*) that Ronggawarsita is famed for having prophesied, a time of transgression and social upheaval so profound that nothing might emerge to rescue the world from the doom it portends. The pleas for renovation were noteworthy because the mausoleum was, in fact, in relatively good shape. The best way to avoid implications of madness is through continuous remodeling and monumentalization, regardless of current conditions.

As formidable as the recuperative power represented by monumentalization may appear, however, unusually problematic points necessarily

[31] See, for example, *Kompas*, January 12, 1983.

Fig. 21. Tomb of Surakarta's prophetic author, R. Ng. Ronggawarsita (1802–73), in the village of Palar (Klaten District), 1983.

emerge, particularly in more isolated kramat sites. Two attempts at upgrading (*mengupgrade*) the grave site of Sèh Maulana Makribi located on Jabal Kanil (a foothill of Mt. Lawu) have proven, for example, fatal. In both cases, a successful pilgrim purchased a marble gravestone for

Makribi as a sign of gratitude but died before the stone could be installed. Attempts to upgrade the Bawang grave site (in the Sragen District) said to hold the remains of R. A. Syah Ila Duni, a consort of the late sixteenth-century ruler Jaka Tingkir, have also been unsuccessful. Tile roofs installed as replacements for the site's outdated thatching of sugarcane leaves invariably collapse.[32] Meanwhile, a grave site in the tiny village of Haunted Earth (Bumi Angker, forty kilometers east of the Wonogiri District center) thwarts the monument process by means of otherworldly methods that, in many respects, go right to the source. Here lies Kyai Jolosono, a legendary ascetic from East Java whose spirit simply refuses to bestow blessings of any kind on government officials. The fortunes of particularly persistent government officials may actually be reversed as was reportedly the case with the subdistrict head of Teguh. After his third visit to Haunted Earth in 1984, the subdistrict head was forthwith demoted. Such signs of potential resistance indicate that the New Order's monument work is still incomplete. In doing so, they recall the uncertainties of "Java"'s limits and, thus, redouble attention and deference paid precisely to those sites exhibiting extraordinary forces that might lie beyond.

Phantom Commands

Associated with kramat grave sites in contempory Java is a practice whose past is significantly vague, a practice by which the spirit of the one entombed is called up for ghostly communication. The most common spirit mediums, or *préwangan* as they are known in Central Java, are women of marginal social status. These are women who, for one reason or another—the recent death of a husband, for example—appear disoriented and especially prone to spirit possession. They are thought to perform involuntarily as "empty-headed" vessels through which a spirit speaks while neighbors gather around in anticipation of timely predictions and clues to success.[33] Such transmissions depend primarily on the whim of the spirit rather than the power of the medium. In 1983, without any warning, a respectable Solonese woman in her midsixties was seized with the ability to speak Dutch fluently. "It's true that she knew a little

[32] Be that as it may, in 1983 local Department of Education and Culture officials anticipated eventual renovation (*Suara Merdeka,* February 24, 1983).

[33] For an introduction to préwangan, see Keeler, *Javanese Shadow Plays, Javanese Selves,* pp. 119–24.

Dutch as a child," her neighbor told me, "but that was nearly fifty years ago. Besides, she talks about her childhood in Holland, and she's never been outside Java. This is really a bother for her since it can start up anytime. She's not one hundred percent herself." Several weeks later, another neighbor came up with a solution. The unfortunate woman's house turned out to be located next to the former home of a Dutch officer whose wife had met an unlikely death: a "toilet accident" (*cilakaning WC*). One night the large Dutch woman sat down upon her porcelain toilet with such determination that it fragmented into pieces that left her mortally wounded. This was the spirit at the bottom of the problem, the neighbor maintained. Offerings were placed at the scene of the old accident and the Solonese woman's condition did, in fact, improve although she still occasionally lapsed into eloquent Dutch. "It was a real disappointment," the neighbor recalled, referring to predictions that might have been uttered, "we couldn't understand a word she was saying. It was useless."[34]

Spirit mediums who perform at grave sites are fundamentally different from these commonplace instances of préwangan possession. Graveside mediums are often, although by no means always, men and have considerable experience in the various sorts of ascetic exercises connected with power and prestige. Moreover, they actively cultivate their talents as mediums and frequently visit the graves of legendary power figures as a means to this end. Although many of these mediums are casually referred to as préwangan, they tend to refer to themselves with the more respectable generic term "elder" (*wong tuwa*), bypassing the undesirable connotations of ordinary spirit possession. And most importantly, unlike involuntarily possessed préwangan, professional graveside mediums maintain that they are completely conscious (*sadar*) during the transmission. They often demonstrate this by repeating verbatim the particular message transmitted once the summoned spirit has vanished.

After incense is burned, flower petals sprinkled on the gravestone, and brief prayers uttered, suddenly the voice of the spirit appears and bestows a *dhawuh,* royal command, a privileged message for listeners assembled near the grave. The message is interrupted from moment to moment by strange corporeal sounds, vocalized noises of a long-distance transmission. From an ancient Javano-Islamic saint such as Sèh Maulana

[34] Although this is a classic example of Javanese spirit possession brought about by the ghost of unfulfilled desire, it is an unusual case. It was the only example of possession I encountered in Java in which the spirit was Dutch. Although other houses inhabited by former Dutch officials residing in Solo are thought to be haunted, the identities of the spirits in these houses remain vague.

Makribi, words of wisdom are coughed up amid sounds of wheezing; from a seventeenth-century Javanese ruler, strategies for promotion appear between kingly grunts; from the grandmother of Mangkunagara I, eighteenth-century gossip and advice for choosing a proper mate squeak through in a high-pitched voice: "Don't play around . . . wait for the right mate . . . slamet." The delivery of a dhawuh command can take only a few minutes or last up to half an hour before the voice disappears as suddenly as it emerged.

Although graveside mediums' eyes roll back, bodies twitch, and arms occasionally flail, these professional spirit communicators do not regard this as possession and frequently use analogies of electricity to explain their unusual skills. The reasoning of one particularly talented medium is revealing here. The transmission of a spirit from the third stratosphere (*stratosfir*), he notes, is received in a moment of coincidence between two wavelengths (*gelombang*): one produced by the medium's concentration, the other generated by the spirit. This momentary contact (*kontak*) emits an electrical charge (*stroom*), zap! What remains are reverberations of the charge, message-filled echoes that appear just as thunder follows lightning. Operating by the same logical circuitry that governs spiritual contacts between a person and the energies of an heirloom keris or house—a circuitry whose terms derive from Western science handbooks translated into Javanese and Malay in the early twentieth century—the explanation suggests that what is present during a dhawuh command is not the spirit per se but the charged *traces* of contact. With the spirit deflected from the scene, the graveside medium thus claims full consciousness.[35]

Although electricity analogies may counter the graveside spirit medium's concern with possession, they do not account for the sense of security usually displayed by the medium's followers. This apparent security is remarkable in light of the dangers normally associated with spirits in Java. "It must be her," whispered one listener straining to hear the words of Mangkunagara I's grandmother. "Wait for the right mate," followed by unintelligible mumbling, then "slamet," and so on. As the dhawuh message slowly emerges, listeners seem to forget the disjunction between speech and speaker, between spirit and medium. This carries a twin

[35] This is, of course, an esoteric explanation. As the medium described his experience to me just after he had finished a dhawuh command, his perplexed followers backed off and kept their distance as if the spiritual charge were still active. Explanations from other graveside spirit mediums are less complex although equally firm in their denial of possession: "My mouth is like a loudspeaker. My brain does not run, but I am completely conscious [sadar]." One medium complained that he was often bothered by CB interference.

threat. First, the flow of words conveying the message may become so compelling that it threatens to erase the boundary separating this world and the spirit's world, implicitly attracting listeners to a place that is not here with the medium, but there with the spirit. The pull of this sort of attraction is known, in Javanese, as *kanyut*, to be "swept away" as one may become, for example, by the sounds of a particularly enthralling gamelan orchestra.[36] Similarly, gazing out into the ocean from Java's south coast has, they say, produced numerous instances of kanyut losses through which persons have simply vanished, carried away into the Queen of the South's realm. The attractions of kanyut enchantment are thus potentially so disorienting that they can lead to spirit possession. At this point, spirit mediation fails.

The second threat arises from the possibility of assuming that the origin of the words is the medium, that is, when messages become so understandable that one forgets that the medium is *not* the source. Mediation fails once again, for what is implied is a hoax in which unwitting listeners have been conned (*kapilut*) by the winning words of a skilled fake.[37] In contemporary Java, where fakes are frequently exposed in newspapers with the peculiarly persuasive accusation "false dhukun" (*dhukun palsu*), being taken in by con artists represents, in turn, a sort of this-worldly spirit possession.

It is in this context that the vocalized noises interspersed within the message are significant. Although graveside spirit mediums sound like an unusually gifted shadow-puppeteer, these noises distinguish the two. For the medium's message is interrupted at regular intervals—every ten seconds or so—by coughs, mumbles, spitting, swallowed laughs, grumbles, sighs. Lodged in the mouth and throat, the noises recall the physicality of words and the person of the medium. But the medium's identity is transferred to that of the spirit because the noises emitted are most often appropriate to the spirit—a toothless Islamic saint, a breathless princess dead for two centuries. (The age of a spirit's voice seems to increase after death.) Before the spirit's character is firmly fixed, however, words reappear, rambling attractively on in the interval between occasional noises. The dhawuh message thus remains suspended between the spirit and the medium, and the noises indicate an essentially split source for identities. Indeed, to the extent that identity is suggested at all, it is constructed across a gap by the regular transfer of the medium's speak-

[36] A gamelan orchestra that many Surakarta musicians find the most enthralling is named, in fact, Kanyut Mesem (Swept Away by a Smile).

[37] Examples of kapilut range from everyday cases of being deceived by a con artist selling wares at exorbitantly high prices—Sekatèn night fairs provide Javanese with many stories of this nature—to tragic instances of political con men of 1965.

er noise to the spirit's character noise, which introduces the words that follow. Before one knows it, one is listening again. These repeated listenings work as built-in phrasings that resist the twin dangers—being swept away or being conned—inherent in undivided attention.

Spirit mediums who perform professional services at kramat grave sites maintain that their talents are thoroughly "traditional" and rooted in Javanese practices of the past. Historical evidence for such a practice—whether from oral recollections or written sources, Javanese and foreign alike—is, however, notably thin. Although cases of spirit possession and instances of dhukun empowered with the ability to communicate with the spirit world are familiar to many Central Javanese, the spectacle of a respectable elder caught in the throes of a graveside dhawuh command is highly unusual in a social world where spirit possession represents the antithesis of one's own powers of concentration. Nevertheless, since the mid-1970s, this form of spirit communication has increasingly attracted the attentions of Central Javanese—most especially the attentions of Javanese elite. That such a communication is imaginable is no doubt the result of the structure of dhawuh message suggested previously, a structure that attributes full consciousness to the medium while bracketing dangers that might threaten the medium's followers. That such a communication is desirable, derives, however, from its status as a *privileged* message, an otherworldly imperial command. Like other New Order expressions of "tradition," dhawuh messages are thought to represent the passing on of cultural inheritance, but they do so to a select few.

In anticipation of dhawuh commands, during the month of Sura in 1982, a small group of retired Solonese (all of whom had resided in Jakarta for some time) accompanied a well-placed spirit medium to Parangtritis on Java's south coast. Like the pilgrims who made the tour of Mangkunagaran grave sites described earlier, the members of this group spoke of the Soehartos in familiar although respectful terms. The medium was a retired army man who had served under Soeharto in the 1962 Irian Jaya campaign and thereafter had been stationed in Jakarta before early retirement to his home in Solo in 1968. He received his first dhawuh communication in 1975 and has functioned since as the chief medium for calling up the spirit of Mangkunagara I on behalf of the Mangkunagaran Palace and the presidential palace in Jakarta.[38]

Those who followed this medium to Parangtritis in 1982 hoped to

[38] Born in 1930, the medium was torn away from his parents at the age of thirteen during the Japanese occupation and then simply roamed. By the age of sixteen, he was fighting in the revolution and soon joined the army. After 1948 he was stationed in Jakarta, Surabaya, Irian Jaya, and then Jakarta once more before retirement. Before his first dhawuh experience, he had, thus, spent twenty-one years (1947–68) away from Solo. Attributing his

receive various incidental blessings—success for their children's businesses, passing grades for their grandchildren's final exams, and so on—and a once-in-a-lifetime mystical experience in the twilight of their lives: a sign from the ocean, a command from the spirit Queen of the South, one final promotion in spiritual status. The medium warned that although they all would most certainly experience something, their experiences would differ. Despite this warning, the group was clearly disappointed by the medium's failure at the first Parangtritis site visited, Parangkusuma, legendary meeting place for Sénapati and the spirit queen. Even after repeated attempts, the late sixteenth-century ruler could not be reached. "The glare of the gas lantern there was just too bright for concentration," complained the medium.

The spirit medium's efforts at the second site visited, the mausoleum of Sèh Maulana Makribi, proved far more successful. Isolated on a small hill overlooking the ocean, the tomb of this Javano-Islamic saint had appeared from the outset more promising. After flower petals, incense, and prayers were offered, a quarter-hour of Islamic chanting in heavy rhythms ended in a series of enthusiastic "amin"s and the sudden emergence of an ancient voice, garbled although audible and partially intelligible. The medium's head rolled back, knees quivered, and hands trembled out in front. Within minutes he was drenched with sweat. Two high school girls who happened to be searching for Makribi's blessings that night began to giggle at first sight of this but then looked terrified, prayed for a moment, and left in haste. The dhawuh message that emerged between coughs was simple enough at first: "Know your place, and you and all your children will meet with slamet and success!" But the message soon swerved into highly cryptic sermonizing that pivoted on figures of eight: eight levels of being, eight kinds of heavenly light, eight disciples, and so on. A long quarter of an hour later, the dhawuh was over. Although befuddled by most of what they had heard, the medium's followers were pleased with the initial pronouncements of "slamet." On the way back to the beach the medium explained that "eight" referred, above all, to the "eight angels" and then reminded the group that they, too, numbered eight. He added that Makribi had been dead for so long that the saint was now entirely toothless, leaving his mouth sore and dry.[39]

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special talents to army travels—"Just like Radèn Mas Sahid!"—this medium embodied the Jakarta-Mangkunagaran connection noted earlier.

[39] The same medium noted similar after-effects from previous experiences. "After Sahid [Mangkunagara I], I'm always sad. It's from his sixteen years of suffering. After Béla Belu I eat all the time." With other spirits, it is "like a camera flash going off in your eyes" and the medium's eyelids flutter later for hours.

Fig. 22. Spirit medium in reflection at the tomb of a distant Mangkunagaran ancestor (Wonogiri District, 1982).

The vigils at the first two sites served as preparation for the night's final scene on the Parangtritis beach proper just after midnight, prime time for contact with the spirit queen. It was here that the group might receive a heavenly sign. Everyone was instructed to stand facing southwest aimed at a point "somewhere between Mecca and the Queen of the South." "Plant your feet as if ready to receive a blow so that you won't fall over backwards," the medium continued. "Hold out your arms. When the force [daya] strikes, don't fall back but hold onto it." Judging from the breadth of the medium's reach, the sign would be about the size of a beachball.

"Eyes closed, begin!" The medium mumbled prayers in unusually rapid High Javanese. Twenty minutes later he was swaying back and forth. The group followed suit. Finally he bent forward and stood perfectly stiff, arms stretched, for another interminable twenty minutes. Just as the group began to sigh with discomfort, the medium broke into an eloquent, measured High Javanese speech. This sermon on the beach went more or less as follows:

> God [Tuhan] is supreme. He is everywhere, out here and up there. I had a friend who doubted God and I asked him if he did not believe in God, how then did the moon and sun get up there? He could not answer and the next day admitted that the sun and moon must be His work. "But where is He?" he asked. "Everywhere, everytime, yesterday and tomorrow," I responded. I continued this way: "You cannot reach Him directly; you would not make it that far. If you stare at the sun you will go blind; am I not right? And that is just one of His creations. Why do you think it is possible to see Him? But He has many servants—thousands and thousands." I explained the situation to my friend this way: "Suppose you have some sort of need that requires government permission—a land settlement, for example—and you go directly to President Soeharto's palace in Jakarta. You get to the gates and ask for President Soeharto himself. What do they say? 'You need not come here. Just go over to the Department of the Interior.' So you go there and what do they say? 'Why did you travel all the way to Jakarta for this? Just go back to Solo to the city hall there.' And so you return to Solo and what does city hall say? 'You need not contact us for this. Go to your district headquarters and they will take care of it.' And so on. This is the way it is with God."
>
> That is how I explained it to my friend. You see, His power just descends; it is not necessary to meet with Him directly. If you tried, you would surely be blinded by His light at the upper levels. But His servants can receive our requests. Those who listen to our requests at sacred [kramat] places like this are His servants. We all will be soul-spirits

> [*arwah*] someday. We are all soul-spirit candidates [*calon arwah*]. Feel the pulse in your wrist—tick tick tick. It is that simple: soul-spirits meet with candidate soul-spirits and *sssst*—contact! These servants carry our requests.[40]

At this point, an old man in the group shouted out, "Wave!" There was indeed a small, but recognizable, lone wave slowly approaching the beach. This was the sign, the medium explained, that we had all been waiting for: "The Queen of the South is saying 'slamet'!"

The Spirit of the New Order

"Slamet"—safe, free, as it were, from disruptive incidents, perhaps even blessed by a generalized state of security—this was the highly predictable yet no less dramatic dhawuh command imagined in the form of a single watery ripple. Converted into a monumentalized landscape of supplication, waiting, and deferred rewards, the various forces that might, at one time, have informed an idiosyncratic terrain of otherworldly pursuits and ascetic exercises were now available as a singular siting of respect. The Queen of the South could be recalled as if she were entombed, enframed within a structure of respect no longer capable of recognizing the potential of other means to power. Now the very displacement of such means—of ngèlmu specifics, rebutan contestations, ascetic exercises, dhanyang communications, and so on—is already disclosed, one might argue, in the singularity of my own appeal here to other means to power, rather than powers. Yet, even had I recalled, as it is tempting to do, a former diversity of powers, such a formulation would operate all too familiarly within a New Order discursive field of recuperated difference which, securely centered, effectively enframes the implications of plurality. As I noted earlier in this chapter (reiterating similar observations in previous chapters), signs of potential resistance implicit in sites such as Haunted Earth where blessings are conspicuously *not* bestowed indicate that New Order spiritual reconstruction is, as the phrase goes, "still incomplete." Recalling the uncertainties of "Java"'s boundaries, such signs refocus that figure's gaze on precisely those sites where ex-

[40] Although the passage quoted here is a paraphase of the medium's midnight advice at Parangtritis it nevertheless is fairly accurate, for the medium broke into this speech often. Minor variations were possible. "Department of the Interior" might become, for example, "Department of Religion."

traordinary power *might* lie. That is, the horizons of this other world, this other "Java," must be continuously approached, albeit with caution, hence "respect," for all sitings to remain compelling.

It is in light of just this sort of completion compulsion—of tireless pursuit and location of apparent diversity, here with respect to the "sacred," as well as "tradition"—that the spirit medium's sermon on the beach is so remarkable. Its open appeal, by analogy, to the authority of a privileged hierarchy appears to expose the very centeredness that a rhetoric of diversity would obscure. Everywhere, it would seem, and at all times, people are in the service of a cosmic bureaucracy making contacts through a series of representatives who report, in the end, to a figure of supremacy, be it God or President Soeharto: "Those who listen to our requests at sacred places like this are His servants." But rather than undermining the appearance of diversity whereby the process of Mini-ization is secured, the sermon effectively underwrites the certainty that such a process assumes, the certainty that unknown, or newly known, sites of the other that might constitute "Java" not only can be tolerated but *must be identified* and, henceforth, respected—"sacred places *like* this." Just as all are soul-spirit candidates, ghostly legends before their time already positioned for spiritual contact (much like the Soehartos themselves in their future anterior claim to legendary royal status by means of a mausoleum already erected), the promise of candidate sacred sites remains continuously haunting.

Rather than simply exposing a process of manipulation that would lie behind appearances of the "sacred," the sermon thus reveals the devoted certainty with which the "sacred" can be, must be, approached and enframed as such, wherever it arises. Moreover, although President Soeharto appears in this sermon at the apex of power, as if in absolute control of all below, he *himself* is, of course, in no way exempt from displays of devotion to "Java" and the pursuit of otherworldly sitings that such a figure demands. Indeed, perhaps no other contemporary Indonesian is more haunted and compelled by the demands of "Java," save Mrs. Soeharto. To this end, the patently "traditional" efforts at cultural recovery in the form of Mini (including the obsessive reconstruction of the Kraton Surakarta itself) have been accompanied by a series of relatively clandestine otherworldly efforts on the part of the presidential palace.

During the 1970s and early 1980s the late Soedjono Humardhani, private assistant to the president and inspector-general of Development, performed as a go-between for the Soeharto entourage and "Javanese"

spiritual forces.[41] At critical moments requiring political decisiveness, the group traveled to Nusakembangan on Java's south coast to retrieve the magical "flower of noble victory" (*sekar wijayakusuma*), the same blossom sought by Central Javanese kings upon coronation as a sign of imperial right.[42] In a similar spirit, the group delivered annual offerings to Mt. Lawu, Mt. Merapi, Parangtritis, Dlepih, and other sites with royal associations. The Soehartos extended their cosmic efforts, however, to sites and practices well beyond the conventional domain of previous kings. The ruins of Mt. Lawu's fifteenth-century Candhi Cetho, for example, were substantially remodeled as were sites at Mt. Srandil near Cilacap and Wishnu Cave in East Java.[43] "For a while," recalled the caretaker of Mt. Lawu's Candhi Sukuh in 1982, "Humardhani and his friends came up here every month. They always traveled at night in seven black Mercedes. That's why the road here was rebuilt. Soeharto himself did not come with them, though."

Partly paralleling the sermon's logic that one need not, oneself, go directly to the source and partly recalling the practices of past kings who sent emissaries on His Highness' behalf, there was, of course, another reason why President Soeharto frequently did not attend in person but only, apparently, in spirit. It was a reason that pertained to diplomatic protocol and the concern that mystical pursuits which went too far might possibly damage credibility, both in international circles and among more devoutly Islamic groups at home. Yet even these concerns could not restrain the president from personally pursuing one of the Soeharto entourage's most sequestered yet energetic mystical exercises: contact with legendary characters from "Java"'s past by means of spirit mediumry. During séances in the 1980s hosted by Indonesia's First Family, a Yogyanese elder routinely transformed, for example, into Wishnu from whom mysticopolitical advice freely flowed.[44] More to the point, the

[41] Born in Solo in 1919, Humardhani attended the colonial Gemeentelijke Handelschool (business school) in Semarang as well as a U. S. Army Finance course at Fort Harrison in the postindependence years. Achieving the rank of Major General in the Indonesian Army, Humardhani also served in the national parliment. During the reconstruction of the Kraton Surakarta, he headed communications with spirits and the preparation of offerings until his death in late 1986.

[42] This illusive flower of legendary royal power blooms only once, at night.

[43] Soeharto's mystical front men were said to exhaust one sacred site for all it was worth and then move on to another site. After Sukuh's powers had diminished (and the site had grown "cold," as one dhukun put it), the group moved on to Cetho, which was rebuilt by Humardhani's son-in-law. By 1982, the group was focusing its attentions on Mt. Srandil.

[44] This medium also performed for 1984 rites occasioned by Soedjono Humardhani's recent purchase of Solo's Bratadiningrat mansion located inside the outer walls of the

Soehartos themselves allegedly are fully capable of transforming into spirits: "When their knees begin to shake, that's the sign that contact with spirits has been made," observed one medium who served the President. "The President always becomes Rama, and Mrs. Soeharto, Sinta."

At the ideal apex of the otherworldly command through which dhawuh messages descend thus sit the New Order's own Lord Rama and Lady Sinta, knees quivering, eyes rolled back, purportedly fully conscious.[45] The president and First Lady do so, nevertheless, as closet Ramas and Sintas, exposing themselves only to persons closest to the heart of their dream state and haunted, no doubt, by the implicit contradiction of their status as would-be "Javanese" royal rulers reigning in an explicity modern era of demokrasi. Yet it was precisely this sort of contradiction—ritually displaced first in the form of a progress for a fallen palace, thenceforth in the form of a ceremonial handshake between "Axis of the Universe"s and Dutch governors establishing the invisible line across which issues of sovereignty are suspended—that motivated the figure of "Java." There is thus something intrinsically authentic, something terribly *asli* about the first family's sequestered spiritual pursuits given authenticity's constant attempt to recover origins that must remain, from the outset, partially obscure. For "the knowledge sublime," observed Mangkunagara IV, "in the land of Java is the religion of the rulers," a knowledge essentially hidden, as Mangkunagara VII's momentary lifting of the veil indicates, and a religion whose enigmatic essence would be the very structure of command through which "it" appears to be conveyed in the form of characteristically elusive blessings. Recalling genealogical ancestors—both literally vis à vis Mrs. Soeharto's claims to Mangkunagaran lineage and figuratively vis-à-vis "Java" itself—Indonesia's president and First Lady would trace the origins of "Java"'s contradiction back, in effect, to the New Order present. That they would do so in partial privacy only reaffirms the extraordinarily privileged nature of exactly what is being sought and how, through phantom commands, it might descend. Like most other New Order pilgrims in search of blessings that the authority of "Java" would bestow, they pursue their search through acts of supplication and invocation. Unlike other pilgrims, however, the Soehartos must perform these acts *as if* cosmic bureaucratic analogies that would place them at the apex of a

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Kraton Surakarta. Calling down the spirit of the mansion's previous owner, the medium assured Humardhani that his move would be carried out with slamet.

[45] Unfortunately, I was unable to witness this modern Ramayana couple firsthand and have relied upon conversations with well-placed Central Javanese mediums and mystics.

hierarchy of spiritual command—hence, in the scandalous position of being the source of their own blessings, the otherworldly equivalent of financial scandals and schemes of self-enrichment—did not obtain. In short, they must continuously recover the contradiction of their own being: privileged descendants of the genealogy of "Java" (and the supplementary contradictions that already assumes) within a state of representation whose current political conventions would compel them to claim otherwise.

Perhaps motivated by such contradictions—that is, both by the continuous elusiveness of "Java"'s potential blessings and, particularly, New Order formulations of phantom commands, graveside supplication, and spiritual authority—some Central Javanese well practiced in ascetic pursuits remain characteristically unsubmissive. Indeed, through opposition to the rise in popularity of sacred grave sites, some mystics have come to occupy a relatively *exaggerated* position of ascetic denial that rejects the authoritative structure of graveside blessings altogether, along with much else this structure would imply. One 1980s mystical guide (loosely associated with the Sapta Dharma sect) summed up his position more or less as follows:

> No one really needs to get involved in all the complications of Thursday-night vigils at graves. Just stay at home and use the direct method. Why are spirits still hanging around their graves? Actually they should have returned to their origin [*asal*] years ago, but they still have unpaid sins. The famous spirits, especially those of rulers, have accumulated lots of sins [*dosa*] because of their singular authority [*kuasa tunggal*]. For example, they must have executed innocent people at some point. This is a necessary result of such authority. By answering someone's graveside requests, the spirit is actually being helped in decreasing its own sin debt.

The most powerful grave sites and the most revered entombed souls represent, as this mystic sees it, the world's biggest sinners.

As an alternative, the guide hosted home meditation sessions for small groups of his village neighbors. The sessions aimed at what the guide termed *katenangan*, the inner calm necessary for receiving blessings from God directly. These blessings, primarily manifested in the form of good health and cured ailments, would facilitate, in turn, outer calm and a general state of well-being. "You will not get rich by this method, but you will find slamet," concluded the guide at the close of one meditation

session.[46] Thus, as potentially scandalous and threatening as the "world's biggest sinners" theory may be to assumptions of spiritual authority now guiding grave-site pilgrims, that threat is displaced as it is converted into a rhetoric of personalized well-being—of "slamet, both inner and outer, spiritual and material" as mystical lessons phrase it—and a state of being within which New Order appeals to "security," "culture," "order," "tradition," and so on, *feel,* it would seem, quite natural. This is particularly true of large mystical associations such as one massive organization whose 1982 congress seated three thousand regional representatives, government officials, and guests in the main pavilion of the Mangkunagaran Palace. The sect's name? Pangèstu (Blessings). Before the Pangèstu Congress 1982 began its long program of tradisional performing arts, the emcee protokol suggested that all those present should pray together, for slamet.

Unlike spiritual guides and leaders of mystical associations who promote well-being as a state that, however compassionately rendered, effectively underwrites the New Order's spiritual status quo, a few other experienced ascetics work toward significantly different ends. "Now is the time *not* for slamet," noted one mystic in 1984, an older man from the Solo area known for his previous feats of long-term seclusion and meditation, "but for disasters. I used to know a yogi who was really good at producing floods, but I lost contact with him when he moved to Jakarta. If [Central Java's volcanic] Mt. Merapi explodes, the Jakarta group will just float away." Recalling a relatively conventional, although under New Order conditions all the more potent mystical principle—out of the debris of disaster arises a revitalized cosmos and the possibility of a profoundly different era, in this case, a post-Soeharto era—this man foresaw the possibility of just the kind of portentous end that "tradition" is compelled to defer continuously for the sake of slamet and in the name of "Java": an advent of difference so different, perhaps, that it would be unrecognizable in the form of "Java" itself.

"For a while I made offerings to the so-called royal ancestors of Mrs. Soeharto," the ascetic continued, "on the chance that they might come to their senses and feel awkward [*pakéwuh*] about what their descendant was doing. But that didn't seem to work. So now I'm concentrating on Mt. Merapi, you know, so that it will erupt." "But why hasn't that

[46] The guide was known locally for curing talents acquired in Bali where he had been stationed in the army in the mid-1950s. Upon returning to Java, he joined Sapta Dharma, a mystical sect, which, he said, encouraged the use of healing techniques.

happened, why hasn't an eruption occurred?" I asked. "Well, there's been a lot of smoke there lately," he noted with a grin, "but this sort of thing isn't easy. I send up a sack of flower petals as my offering, but Soeharto's group goes up there with an entire flower market, so the mountain remains quiet. Spirits like lots of offerings." "Certainly the spirits can distinguish *your* motives from those of the Soeharto regime," I protested. "Not necessarily," he retorted, "the spirits can be suckered too. After all, they're Javanese, aren't they?"[47]

Working at right angles to the constraints that the figure of "Java" would impose, the ascetic nevertheless did so by employing means wholly recognizable to this figure in its otherworldly sitings, offerings proferred to identifiable forces, to spirits who by nature, he had observed, like lots of offerings. How could it be otherwise? "What else can one do?" he added. "It's better than just sitting around and doing nothing." In much the same spirit that prophecies foretold the end of the realm with the future passing of Pakubuwana X, the ascetic fully foresaw the epistemologically disastrous end he worked toward—a point beyond, perhaps, the quotation marked framework surrounding "Java." And he was able to do so in light of his very embeddedness within that framework. Knowing that spirits, like "Javanese," can be suckered too, suggests that for one moment at least, they might not. If that moment calls for an end construed in the most negative terms of ascetic denial—Disaster!—it does so (once more) by bringing the contradiction upon which "Java" was borne to its logical conclusion, a point beyond the discursive limits of a genealogy of origins, of tradition, cultural diversity, and so on, a point beyond, in a word, itself. And, thus, a point beyond the lines inscribing *On the Subject of "Java."* In the meantime, the ancestors of President and Mrs. Soeharto do not yet appear to feel at all awkward about the exploits of their descendants.

[47] "Suckered" is an attempt to translate the Javanese *dikempongi,* the passive verb form of *kempongan,* a baby pacifier. Unlike the English *pacifier, kempongan* is specific to itself and not borrowed from a more general term of pacification. In Central Java, *dikempongi* conjures up an implicitly humorous image of being simultaneously plugged up, quieted down, and sucked in. As the ascetic later noted, unlike that which it replaces, a kempongan is empty and filled only with promise.

AFTERWORD

In February 1983, nine months after the 1982 general election, pathologists at Jakarta's central morgue encountered two ominous corpses. "Each body," according to the international edition of *Time,* "bore the tattoo of a scorpion, the mark of one of the capital's underworld gangs, and each had been shot at point-blank range."[1] Within weeks, the Central Javanese city of Yogyakarta became the focus of similar point-blank killings aimed at underworld figures and petty criminals, or *gali-gali.* On April 3, Lt. Col. M. Hasbi (commander of the Yogyakarta Military District 0734) issued a statement on behalf of the newly formed "Elimination of Crime Operation" to the city daily *Kedaulatan Rakyat.* "All criminals, whether they operate individually or join together in a gang or a particular group, should surrender themselves at once to the officials."[2] Government officials noted that since late 1982 there had been a marked increase in criminal activity; the "Elimination of Crime Operation" was designed to counter this increase. Thus began a prolonged, nationwide series of killings referred to as the "Mysterious Shootings" (Penembakan Misterius) or the "Mysterious

[1] *Time* (international edition), September 12, 1983, p. 26.
[2] *Kedaulatan Rakyat,* April 4, 1983.

Marksman" (Penembak Misterius), and, finally, simply as *Petrus* (from *Pe*nembak[an] Mis*terius*).

Solo soon was filled with its own Petrus stories. "Three nights ago," began one young man in mid-June 1983, "shiny black jeeps pulled up in my neighborhood in Dawung, right next door to my house." The man's neighbor was a local gali, a character known for his modest success at retrieving protection money. According to the story, this neighbor was escorted away by several men dressed in civilian clothes and placed in one of the jeeps. After picking up two more Solonese underworld figures from other neighborhoods, the black jeeps circled the city for an hour. Suddenly, they stopped and released one of the hostages who was then shot dead. An hour later, a second hostage was released to a similar end. By this time, the Dawung gali was, as the story went, begging for mercy. Then, he too was released. But this time no shots were fired, and the ex-hostage returned home with his story.

The bodies of the night's first two hostages were later discovered and taken to the city morgue for identification by family and friends. Like many of the Petrus stories that circulated in Solo during the summer of 1983, this one proved true. As the summer continued, corpses with point-blank wounds frequently turned up on the edge of town or in public garbage bins along Solo's city streets. There was an informal open-morgue policy by which anyone who wished to check on the results of rumored killings could do so. In November, a local army man told me that in the Solo area alone, six months of Petrus operations had claimed the lives of no less than five hundred persons identified as gali. Given the eerily public manner in which many of the corpses were disposed of and verifications provided by the morgue, this figure for Solo did not seem far off the mark. Many Solonese asserted that they now felt safer in their neighborhoods and city streets, particularly at night.

Early in the summer, it was already common knowledge in Solo that the central government was, in one way or another, behind Petrus. The particular jeeps used by the death squads for taking hostages appeared to belong to well-connected groups. So too, the bullets retrieved from the victims' bodies were said to belong to army-issue weapons. And most telling of all, local officials maintained a conspicuous silence concerning the government's possible role in the killings and reported the details of each incident with a sense of satisfied detachment. As press coverage of Petrus victims increased, so did objections from some opposed to the operation's tactics. Indonesia's Lembaga Bantuan Hukum (Legal Aid Institute), for example, repeatedly criticized Petrus's disregard of basic legal

processes.[3] At a press conference on July 27, Ali Murtopo (vice-chairman of the Supreme Advisory Council) countered these criticisms by asserting that "the elimination of crime by means of mobilizing 'mysterious killers' could be justified in accordance with stipulations for carrying out defense and security duties."

H. Amirmachmud, head of the People's Consultative Council and the Indonesian national legislative assembly, responded to the press in terms that were far more revealing:

> "If there are killings, that is a result of the presence of crime," [Amirmachmud] said at a press conference after being received by President Soeharto in the President's executive office on Thursday.
>
> . . . "To secure the welfare of more than 146 million Indonesian inhabitants, it is preferable to sacrifice X hundreds of criminals," he added.
>
> According to Amirmachmud . . . security efforts that are now being carried out by the government, particularly by the Commander of the Indonesian Armed Forces, are very much a sukses. Criminality has already declined drastically. A sense of security among the people has already begun to grow again. . . . The creation of this sense of physical security [*keamanan fisik*], Amirmachmud continued, has also already resulted in the creation of political stability [*stabilitas politik*]. "Usually, according to my experience in Jakarta as Minister of the Interior, if there are crimes that are premeditated, extraordinary, and sadistic, according to my feeling they represent PKI [Indonesian Communist Party] efforts at its desired come back. So, with the present security efforts, there is also political security," he added.[4]

By coincidence, in the midst of the Petrus operation, Indonesia was the focal point of a formidable natural phenomenon. On June 11, 1983, a total solar eclipse traveled directly across the archipelago for the first time since 1626. Well aware of the interests of foreign observers—initial estimates reckoned that twenty million visitors would flock to Indonesia for the event—the government anticipated substantial financial rewards and an opportune chance to promote tourism. As early as April, security officials were already using the eclipse as a rationale for anti-gali operations. As Yogyakarta's military commander, M. Hasbi, put it: "Frankly,

[3] For reports on Lembaga Bantuan Hukum's stance, see: *Kompas,* June 29, 1983; July 7, 1983; and *Suara Merdeka,* September 13, 1983. Criticisms from Soerjono Soekanto and Arief Budiman appear in *Kompas,* July 5, 1983.

[4] *Kompas,* July 23, 1983.

this operation joins in 'smoothing out' a secure atmosphere as the solar eclipse on June 11 approaches. If the foreign guests are disturbed, they will say: 'Don't go to Indonesia. There are many pickpockets, robbers, and so on.' We will lose out."[5]

Although one might have expected the Soeharto regime to promote the June 11 eclipse domestically as a wonderous astronomical event (filled with possibilities for scientific study that would demonstrate a New Order commitment to education) and thereby relieve tensions accompanying Petrus's point-blank security operations, the regime did, in fact, exactly the opposite. The eclipse itself became a new focus for fear. So that millions of Indonesians would not be "blinded by the eclipse," officials asserted, they should stay indoors for the duration of the event. Some Central Javanese administrators warned that the eclipse would emit a deadly radiation (*radiasi*); others relied on "traditional" attitudes, as the following news report notes:

> The District Head of Sukoharjo, Gatot Amrih S. H., reminded sub-district and village heads in his region to upgrade information concerning the issue of the solar eclipse for the community.
>
> People are not permitted to observe the solar eclipse. This would be a major violation, explained the District Head.
>
> In presenting information concerning the TSE [Total Solar Eclipse], the District Head asked that explanations use community language. Scientific language or terms that would only confuse people due to their limited knowledge, should not be used.
>
> "Just let people view the eclipse as the result of the sun's being eaten by a gigantic demon. Let that folk tale go ahead and grow in this fertile moment, as long as it makes them afraid of observing this incident [peristiwa]," stated Gatot Amrih S. H.
>
> At the moment that the TSE occurs, vigilance must be increased. It was suggested that as the TSE approached, government employees in sub-districts and villages return to their homes and watch over their families and the security of their surroundings. Meanwhile, security in sub-district and village central offices will be handled directly by the sub-district and village heads.[6]

When the eclipse struck Solo at midday, all offices, businesses, and markets were closed, and city streets were completely deserted. Several defiant high school students armed with equipment for viewing the solar event were sent home immediately when they arrived at their observation

[5] *Tempo,* April 16, 1983, p. 15.
[6] *Kedaulatan Rakyat,* June 4, 1983.

site on Solo's broad Manahan sports field. They were informed that they were completely free to observe the event on televison in the security of their homes. Like so many Indonesians who tuned in to national programming, what they would see was not only a televised image of the eclipse itself but repeated images of foreign guest-observers enjoying the eclipse firsthand, unharmed. Yet most Solonese appeared unconcerned by the implicit contradiction conveyed by such images and instead expressed gratitude that the government had not only provided due warning but had seen fit to televise the event.

Villagers were similarly devoted to security precautions for the 1983 eclipse. In the Central Javanese village of Karanganom, Ward Keeler observed:

> Transparent [roof] tiles were carefully covered over or replaced by clay tiles prior to the eclipse, making it necessary to light a kerosene lamp, even during the day, to see anything. Houses of recent construction have air vents above windows and doors. These were stuffed with cloth, or covered with opaque paper, lest any light enter. Some people laid in supplies of food, both because markets would be closed the day of the eclipse, and because there was a general feeling that one should be prepared for any and all events.[7]

As the cautionary remarks of the district head of Sukoharjo suggested, the Total Solar Eclipse, indeed, the TSE, was foreseen as a moment of "incident" to be avoided. Only by not observing the eclipse firsthand might one be prepared for any and all events and order be secured. Echoing Sudomo's campaign-period concerns about the crowd that made his hair turn white, a Solonese army man warned me on the eve of the eclipse that "when lots of people come out into the streets together, it's just not safe. Who knows what could happen." Maintaining security during the TSE thus meant that crowds of onlookers, crowds whose very presence in New Order times anticipates incidents—in this case, an extraordinary incident already prefigured by the solar eclipse itself—should, at all costs, be avoided. In Solo, just after the sun had fully reappeared, my neighbors emerged from their homes to proclaim the eclipse a sukses.

Within the context of the Petrus operation, the government's handling of security during the solar eclipse represented an exemplary exercise in orderliness, a working model of the state in which nothing happens.

[7] Ward Keeler, "Sharp Rays: Javanese Responses to a Solar Eclipse," *Indonesia* 46 (1988): 92.

Unlike the brutal tactics of Petrus, the security measures employed in the obscured light of the eclipse fit well within the rhetoric of slamet. Government officials could, quite unproblematically, appeal to "tradition"—"let that folk tale go ahead and grow in this fertile moment," advised the district head—even if, as Keeler points out, "the great anxiety the eclipse aroused was not 'traditional'."[8] For it is precisely in contradistinction to the construct "incident," that "tradition" appears as an ideally cultural means for securing slamet and successing even the most unusual of events, including a TSE. By contrast, Petrus's death squads and discarded corpses would seem to represent the very antithesis of slamet, a state within which the security of culture itself was no longer compelling. The timely emergence of the Petrus operation, however, proved otherwise.

The sudden rise of crime in late 1982 and 1983 was not the first upswing of its kind in New Order Indonesia. Immediately after the national elections in 1971 and 1977, increases in robbery, burglary, and protection schemes had also occurred.[9] As in the past, after the 1982 election many gali-gali figures who had been hired as muscle men for the government's political organization (Golkar, or functionary group, as noted in the Introduction) and the two quasi-opposition political parties (partai politik) were still organized and in gear but without any obvious work. Moreover, many of these men (particularly those who served Golkar) were sorely disappointed both by the limited rewards of the 1982 campaign season as well as unfulfilled promises of security force positions in the postelection system. "The gali-gali population in Solo rose dramatically in late 1982," observed one Indonesian lawyer, "and their organization centers seemed to shift from East Java to Solo."[10] By early 1983, the city was indeed haunted by numerous incidents of crime. In Solo's Kepatihan neighborhood, a local underworld figure was beaten to death by his own neighbors who were exasperated by his attempts to extract protection money too close to home. "This incident was extraordinary," added the same lawyer, "I've never heard of a gali being killed by his own community."

No doubt the result, in part, of the unpredictable consequences of this sort of action, *community* action, the central government implemented its own "Mysterious Marksman" operation. Yet because such an operation was unprecedented in the post-1965–66 history of the New Order,

[8] Keeler, "Sharp Rays," p. 94.

[9] I am indebted to several Indonesian lawyers (who preferred to remain anonymous) for bringing this to my attention.

[10] Personal communication, on the condition of anonymity.

Petrus signaled a significant shift in political approach for the Soeharto regime. Responding to rises in crime after previous election years, the government had rounded up unruly gali-gali and locked them away in prisons where these men were kept, for a time, and prepared for future security operations whenever they might be needed. In 1983, however, many of these same men were simply disposed of by means of the "Mysterious Marksman." As the year closed, the total number of Petrus fatalities in Indonesia reportedly approached four thousand.[11] The significance of the extent of Petrus's reach was equaled only by the operation's "nonpartisan" politics. A great number of the underworld victims had served as local strongmen for the government's Golkar organization during the 1982 election campaigns. Such men, it seems, were no longer necessary.[12]

The death squad operations thus demonstrated a new confidence on the Soeharto regime's part both at the level of international relations—it could get away with such a thing fully confident that there would be no real reprisals—*and* at the national level where older security forces, although obviously not simply abandoned, were becoming translated into a broader discourse on security. For when Amirmachmud asserted, as I quoted before, that "to secure the welfare of more than 146 million Indonesian inhabitants, it is preferable to sacrifice X hundreds of criminals," he did so en route to a more formidable formulation of how state security, under certain conditions, might appear to articulate itself. "We are not only creating a state of law," Amirmachmud noted, "but moving toward a state of law, a state of slamet, and a state of culture" (*negara kebudayaan*): quite literally, a culture state.[13]

That such a notorious New Order strongman as Amirmachmud should arrive at this conclusion indicates just how far the state of culture has extended itself in contemporary Indonesia. Yet also revealed is a

[11] In October 1983, the director of Lembaga Bantuan Hukum (LBH), Mulya Lubis, estimated the number killed at three thousand; in December, Adnan Buyung Nasution (former chairman of LBH) estimated four thousand. Outside estimates doubled this figure. For a summary of Petrus events and reports, see Justus M. van der Kroef, "'Petrus': Patterns of Prophylactic Murder in Indonesia," *Asian Survey* 25 (1985): 745–59. See also, *Far Eastern Economic Review,* September, 1983, pp. 29–30; August 9, 1984, pp. 26–27. See also, *Tapol* 58 (1983): 1–5; 61 (1984): 8–10; 62 (1984): 9; 64 (1984): 10–11; 65 (1984): 18.

[12] The timely coincidence of the eclipse in Indonesia and Petrus operations was made evident in a Lembaga Penelitian Pendidikan dan Penerbitan Yogya book of news clippings concerning the 1983 anti-gali operation. The book's title read *Gerhana Bagi Gali* (Eclipse for Gali) (Yogyakarta: Lembaga Penelitian Pendidikan dan Penerbitan Yogya, 1983).

[13] *Suara Merdeka,* July 29, 1983.

sense of limits, a sense that such a state has not yet been fully achieved, that there are still spirits that refuse to be ritualized, moments of rebutan contestation that trouble the boundaries of culture, and prophecies that work toward ends radically opposed to those that guide the figure of "Java." In short, the project of Mini-ization is still, necessarily, incomplete.

When "Beautiful Indonesia" emerged in the wake of the 1965–66 killings as a vision of secured cultural inheritance to displace the violence of the New Order's own origins, it did so as a reiteration of a more long-term displacement of origins: that upon which the dominant object of cultural desire, the Surakartan figure of "Java," was, under colonial conditions, founded. Given these conditions, this figure of desire was from the outset fundamentally split. While "Java" flourished in colonial Surakarta (through literary and ritual reproduction) as a sign of all that Dutch rule might *not* represent, it was also capable of foreseeing (through prophecy) its own end. It is just such an end, of course, that Mini, the state of culture, and, by extension, the Soeharto regime itself must continuously deny. And with this denial what is overlooked is the power of comments such as those from Surakartans who, when confronted with their reconstructed Kraton, replied, "Quite handsome, but . . ." Sequestered within this ellipsis is a haunting trace of difference which says, in effect, that the end has already come.

Although the constant denial of this conclusion motivates further expansions of "Beautiful Indonesia," one wonders about the status of Mini in the near future as the Soeharto regime faces its final years. Recent government bans imposed on several leading Indonesian periodicals (including the long-established *Tempo*) have provoked demonstrations followed by, as I now write, a series of arrests. Protests of the sort that opposed "Beautiful Indonesia" in 1971 and the construction of a New Order cultural dreamland, however, still seem unlikely, at the moment, to reappear. One could argue, perhaps, that the more sharply pronounced political encounters become, the more traditional cultural values appear to offer a certain sense of security, a stabilizing point of reference. Yet might not Mini itself one day stand as an unintended monument to an era strangely devoted to "tradition"? Then Indonesians might visit such a monument and note, not uncritically, "Quite handsome, but . . . ," and the reign of culture would have come to its unmistakable, unexpected end.

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"Pemberton's book is an anthropological tour de force; it disturbs the usual distinction between culture and history that has been the predicate for much historical anthropology as well as for our commonplace assumptions about the place of culture in social analysis. Culture becomes, for Pemberton, an 'effect' of history rather than its explanation, and, in the case of New Order Indonesia, the site for the production of new forms of state domination and power. This 'history of the present' is as much an investigation into the genealogies of anthropology as into the multiple histories of contemporary cultural practices in Indonesia."

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JOHN PEMBERTON is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Washington.

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